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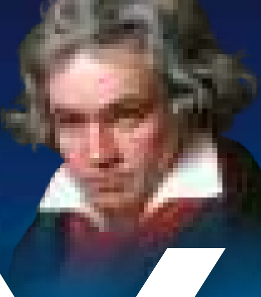
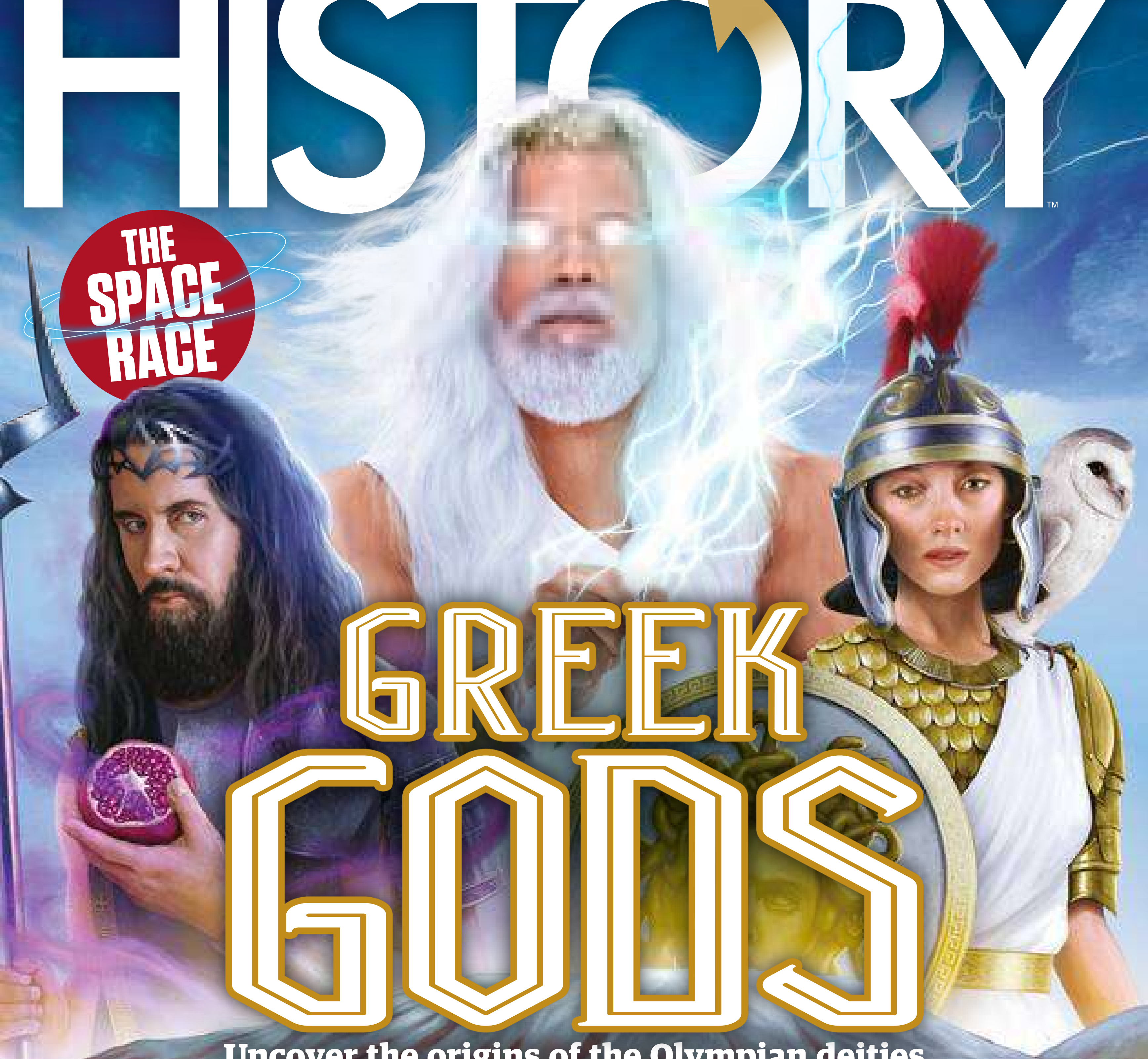


Dark side of Beethoven
What tormented this master composer?



THE SPACE RACE

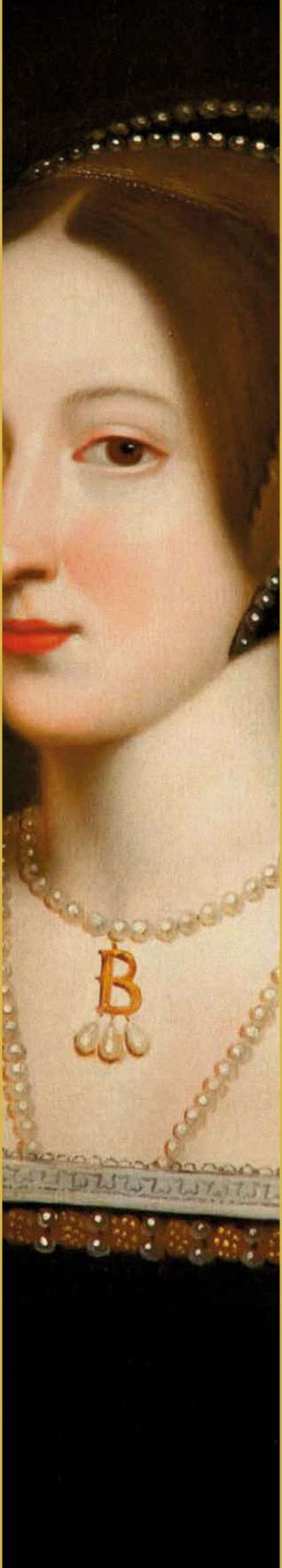
GREEK GODS

Uncover the origins of the Olympian deities and how they shaped Ancient Greek culture

SUFFRAGETTE CHAMPION
How Pankhurst won women the right to vote

FUTURE
ISSUE 117

BLACK CATS AND BROKEN MIRRORS
Strange roots of popular superstitions revealed



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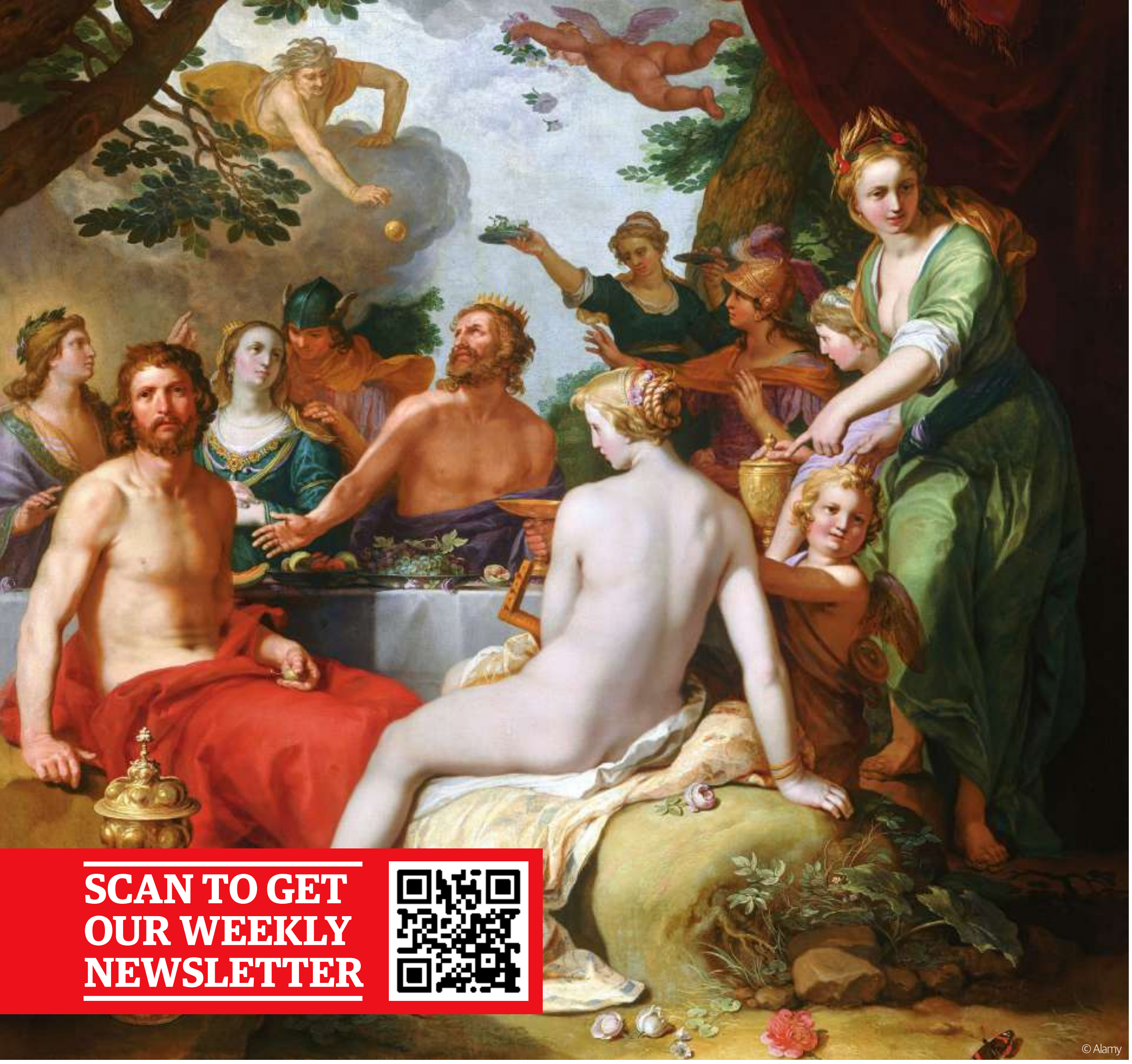

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SCAN TO GET OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

The Greek gods not only inspired future authors with their archetypal stories, but also many artists

Welcome

The importance of Ancient Greek culture and storytelling is not something to be underestimated. Many of the stories are outlandish and some even seem to throw all sense of logic out of the window, but there sits within the wide scope of Greek mythology the archetypes of huge swathes of modern entertainment. With its vengeful, all-powerful gods and plucky heroes, within its tales of justice and honour, we see the roots of what has become known as the 'hero's journey', a staple of storytelling that could be overlaid onto most modern blockbuster movies.

So it seemed like we should really go back to the roots and explore some of these ancient tales, with a special focus on the Ancient Greek gods. What did the Greeks believe about Zeus, Hades, Athena and the rest? Where did these gods actually come from culturally? We welcome Annette Giesecke to walk us through all of these questions in our lead feature.

Also in this issue we learn about Africa's greatest queens, discover the dark side of Beethoven, delve into the life of Emmeline Pankhurst, find out why medieval writers were so interested in dragons and unearth the origins of popular superstitions. And before all of that, we look at the history of the space race.

Plenty for you to get your teeth into - I hope you enjoy the issue.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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CONTENTS

ISSUE 117

ALL ABOUT...

Key Events 12
Timeline of the space race

Inside History 14
Command module Columbia

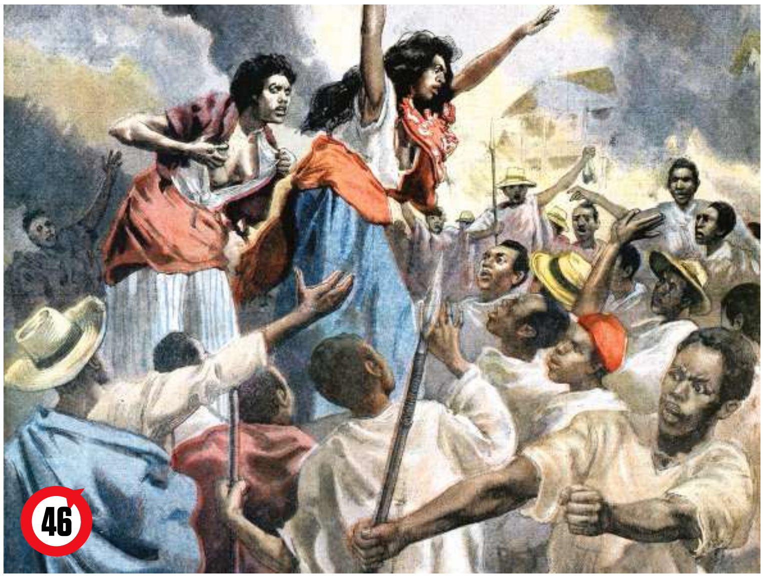
Anatomy 16
Dog space suit

Historical Treasures 17
Apollo 11 mission patch

Hall Of Fame 18
Astronauts and cosmonauts

Q&A 20
Brian Odom on NASA and the Cold War

Places To Explore 22
Space museums to visit around the world



FEATURES

26 **Greek Gods**
Origins and rituals surrounding the famous deities

36 **Emmeline Pankhurst**
The militant life of a champion for women's suffrage

42 **Here There Be Dragons**
Why were medieval stories obsessed with this mythical beast?

46 **Great Queens of Africa**
From ancient monarchs to modern matriarchs

52 **The Dark Side of Beethoven**
The troubled life of one of the greatest composers in history

58 **History of Superstitions**
Common and strange beliefs, and where they came from

REGULARS

Defining Moments 06
Photos with amazing stories

Greatest Battles 64
British colonial forces crush rebellion at Omdurman

What If 70
The Qing dynasty had reformed sooner?

Through History 74
At home with the Boleyns

Reviews 78
Our verdict on the latest historical books and media

History Vs Hollywood 81
Is *Battle of the River Plate* historically seaworthy?

Recipe 82
How to make loukoumades

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AFRICA'S GREATEST QUEENS
Dark side of Beethoven
ALL ABOUT
HISTORY
THE SPACE RACE
GREEK GODS
Uncover the origins of the Olympian deities and how they shaped Ancient Greek culture
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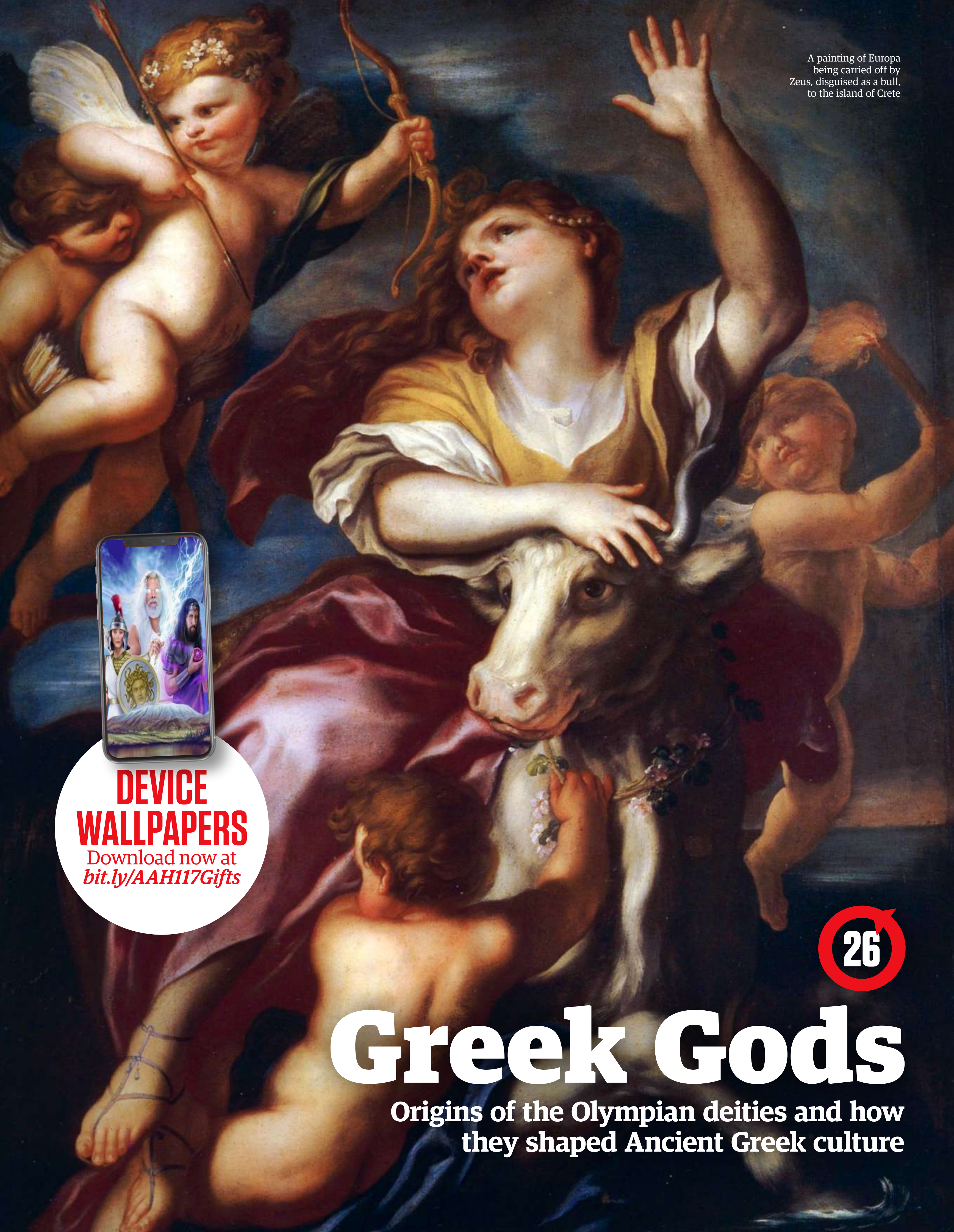
Discover our exclusive offer for new readers on page 24

Main image: © Getty Images


A painting of Europa being carried off by Zeus, disguised as a bull, to the island of Crete

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26

Greek Gods

Origins of the Olympian deities and how they shaped Ancient Greek culture

Defining Moments

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3 June 1937

THE DUKE OF WINDSOR MARRIES WALLIS SIMPSON

On 3 June 1937, the Duke of Windsor, formerly King Edward VIII, married Wallis Simpson in France. He had met Simpson while she was married to her second husband. The king had abdicated in 1936 in order to marry the American divorcee and the English crown passed to his younger brother, George VI, the father of the future Elizabeth II.

© Getty Images

17 June 1994

OJ SIMPSON LEADS POLICE IN A CAR CHASE ON LIVE TV

On 17 June 1994, former American football player OJ Simpson was chased by police on live TV. They intended to charge him with the murder of his ex-wife Nicole Simpson and Ron Goldman. Driving a white Ford Bronco, Simpson evaded the police for over an hour while holding a gun to his head. He eventually surrendered and was arrested, and was later acquitted of the killings.

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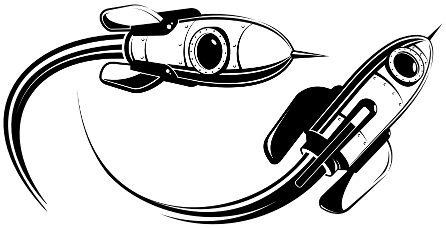
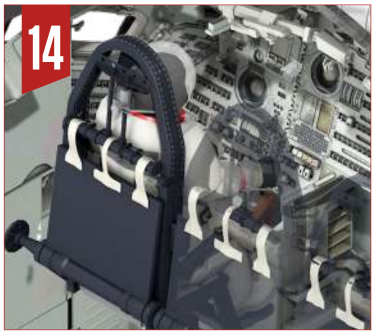


From cosmonaut canines to Cold War rivalry, we explore the stellar history of humanity's mission to conquer the stars



14

INSIDE THE COMMAND MODULE COLUMBIA

16

ANATOMY OF A DOG SPACE SUIT

18

ASTRONAUTS AND COSMONAUTS

20

NASA AND THE COLD WAR

Main image source: © Getty Images

Written by Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth

Key Events

APRIL 1961

FIRST MAN IN SPACE

Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin becomes the first man in space when he successfully completes a 108-minute flight, orbiting the Earth a single time. Following the flight Gagarin becomes a celebrity within the Soviet Union.

SPUTNIK 2 3 Nov 1957

The second experimental spacecraft successfully launched into Earth orbit, Sputnik 2 contains onboard the dog Laika – the first biological organism to enter space.

LUNAR 2 12 Sep 1959

The Soviet Union launches Lunar 2, the first spacecraft to successfully land on the surface of the Moon. Upon impact it scatters a number of medallions carrying Soviet emblems across the surface.

HAM THE SPACE CHIMP 31 January 1961

NASA sends Ham, a chimpanzee, into space. Despite the capsule losing pressure, Ham is saved by his spacesuit and returns to Earth.

4 OCT 1957

1 OCT 1958

APRIL 1961

EXPLORER 1 31 Jan 1958

The United States launches its first satellite, Explorer 1, following the launch of Sputnik three months earlier. Its cosmic ray detector leads to the discovery of the Van Allen radiation belt.

SPUTNIK 5 19 Aug 1960

The USSR launches Sputnik 5 carrying two dogs, Belka and Strelka, who become the first animals to return to Earth following a day in space.

FIRST AMERICAN IN SPACE 5 MAY 1961

Alan Shepard becomes the first American astronaut in space. Due to the placement of the capsule's portholes he is unable to actually see the stars.

4 OCT 1957

SPUTNIK 1

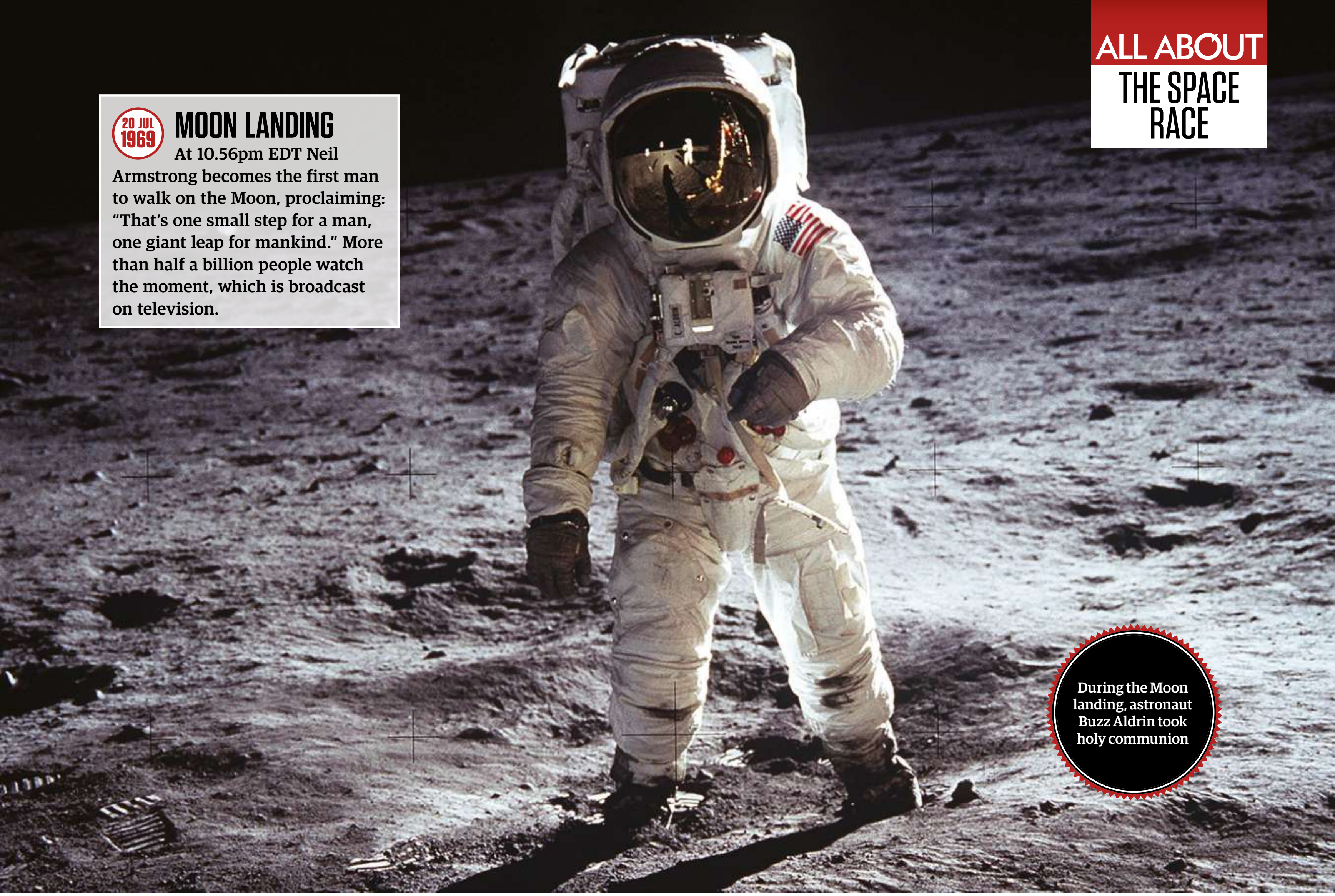
The Soviet Union successfully sends the first man-made object into space, the world's first orbital satellite. About the size of a beach ball, Sputnik orbits the Earth for about three weeks. News of the satellite's launch shocks the world and is an important early stage in the space race.

Despite being only 58cm in diameter, Sputnik weighed a whopping 83kg

1 OCT 1958

NASA GETS TO WORK

The newly founded National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) becomes operational. Based on the earlier NACA (National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics), NASA is a civilian rather than military organisation and demonstrates the United States commitment to the space race.



20 JUL 1969

MOON LANDING

At 10.56pm EDT Neil Armstrong becomes the first man to walk on the Moon, proclaiming: "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." More than half a billion people watch the moment, which is broadcast on television.

During the Moon landing, astronaut Buzz Aldrin took holy communion

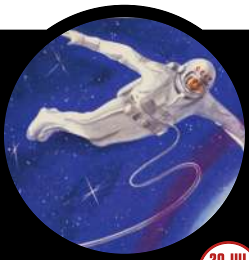
'WE CHOOSE TO GO TO THE MOON' 12 SEPT 1962

President Kennedy makes a landmark speech in which he announces that the United States will put a man on the Moon before the end of the decade.

FIRST SPACE WALK

18 MARCH 1965

For 12 minutes Soviet cosmonaut Alexei Leonov floats freely in outer space on the end of a five-metre tether, becoming the first person to 'space walk'.



APOLLO 13 1970

An oxygen tank explodes aboard NASA's third moon landing mission, but the astronauts are able to safely return home in the space craft's lunar module.

1963

20 JUL 1969

1975

MARINER 4 FLYBY

14-15 JULY 1965

Mariner 4 becomes the first spacecraft to not only successfully travel to Mars but also the first to take a photograph of another planet from space.

APOLLO 1 DISASTER

27 JAN 1967

Astronauts Virgil Grissom, Edward White and Roger Chaffee lose their lives when a fire breaks out on their spacecraft during a launch rehearsal test.

FIRST ORBITAL SPACE STATION LAUNCHED

19 APRIL 1971

Salyut 1 is launched by the USSR, becoming the first space station. It orbits the Earth 3,000 times during 157 days in orbit.

1963

FIRST WOMAN IN SPACE

On 6 June 1963 Valentina Tereshkova becomes the first woman in space, orbiting the Earth 48 times. That same year she marries Andriyan Nikolayev, with the couple's daughter being the first child born from parents who have both been exposed to outer space.

Despite having no flying experience, Tereshkova began training as a cosmonaut in 1961

1975

FIRST JOINT APOLLO-SOYUZ MISSION

As a policy of detente leads to a cooling of tensions between the two superpowers, a joint mission between the USA and the USSR is launched. A symbolic handshake, broadcast globally, between commanders Tom Stafford and Alexei Leonov can be seen as a practical end to the space race.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

COMMAND MODULE COLUMBIA

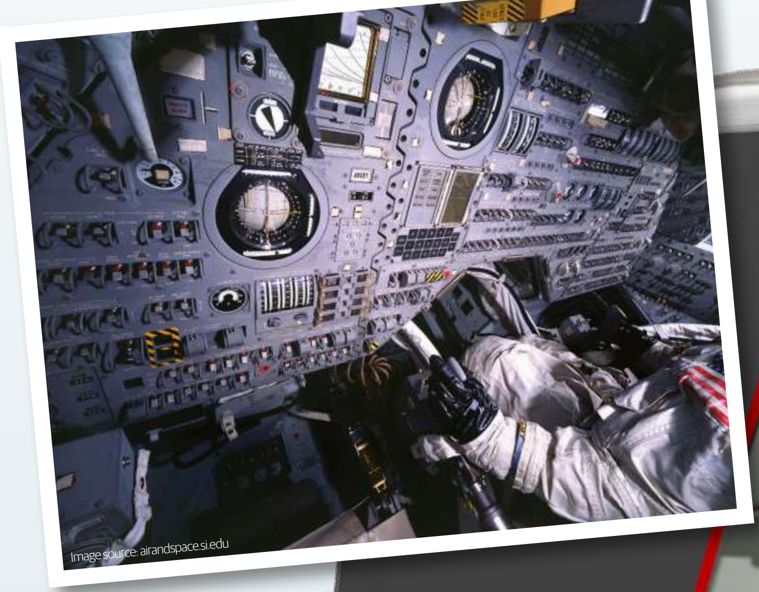
United States

1969

On 16 July 1969, astronauts Neil Armstrong, Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin and Michael Collins blasted off from Cape Kennedy in Florida. The Apollo 11 mission aimed to see the first human Moon landing, with the astronauts then returning safely to Earth. The famous space flight not only saw the Americans achieve their aim, but it also became the space mission where humanity first walked on the Moon. A few hours after the successful lunar landing of Apollo 11 on 20 July, Armstrong emerged from the spacecraft with a TV camera, ready to transmit the first Moon walk to an audience of an estimated 650 million people.

"One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," Armstrong's voice echoed around the world. The Americans had succeeded in putting the first man on the Moon, followed almost immediately by the second, Aldrin, who joined Armstrong on the lunar surface 20 minutes later. While outside the spacecraft, Armstrong and Aldrin placed medallions on the Moon's surface which commemorated three Apollo 1 astronauts and two cosmonauts who had died in accidents during their endeavours to reach space.

The Apollo 11 spacecraft was made up of three modules: the Service Module that contained the main propulsion system, the Lunar Module (nicknamed The Eagle) that landed on the moon, and the Command Module (nicknamed Columbia) that was the only section to return to Earth. The Command Module began its descent on 24 July and carried the three astronauts back to a hero's return, landing in the Pacific Ocean. From there the astronauts were picked up by a ship waiting for them nearby. The Columbia became a highly significant piece of space race history, and was exhibited across the United States until it found its permanent home at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in 1971.



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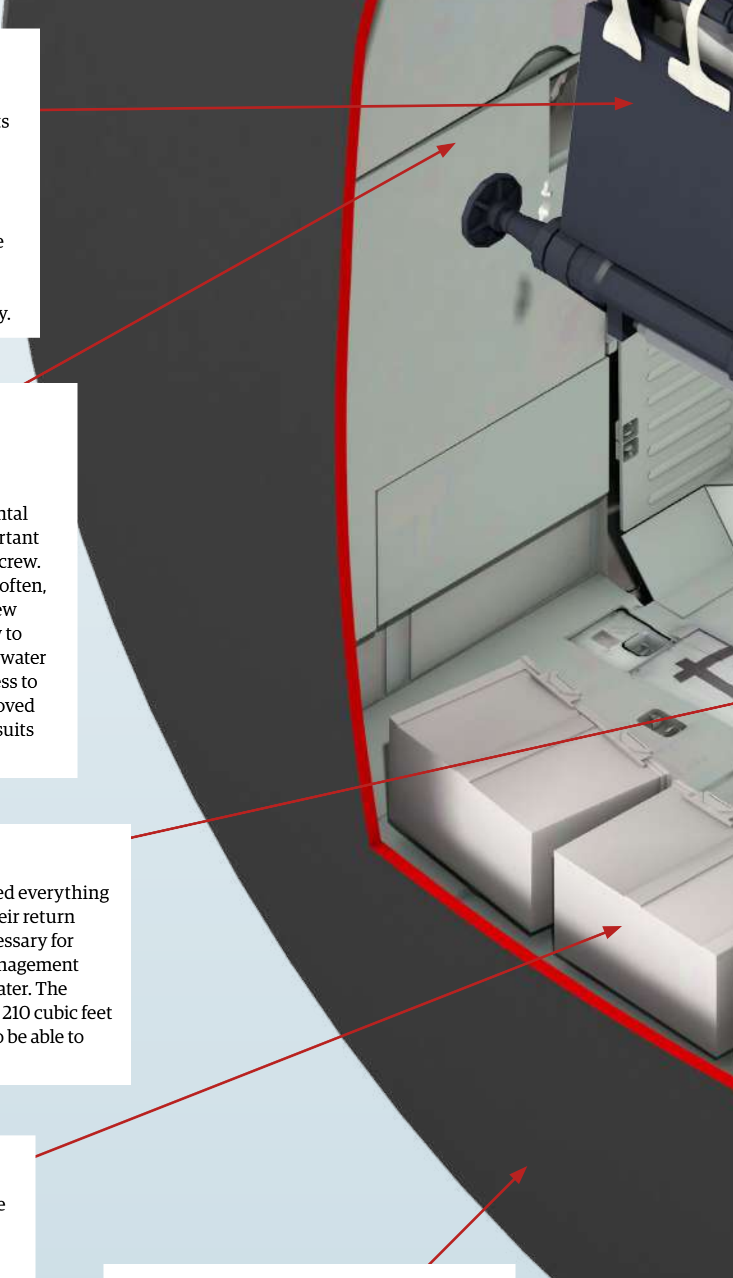


CREW COUCHES

The three crew couches were fitted with seatbelts and shoulder straps so the astronauts could sit safely and comfortably during the launch and re-entry. The seats could also be moved to a variety of angles, from lying flat to sitting at 85 degrees, to support the crew at different points of the mission. It was possible to remove the middle seat during the flight to give the crew better standing access to the spacecraft's controls and lower equipment bay.

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEM CONTROLS

Vital for making sure the Columbia remained inhabitable, the environmental system controls ensured several important subsystems could be managed by the crew. They did not need to be adjusted very often, hence their positioning behind the crew couches. The system allowed the crew to manually manipulate the oxygen and water subsystems and it also gave them access to a pressure suit subsystem, which removed water and pollutants from their spacesuits and from the module.

CREW COMPARTMENT

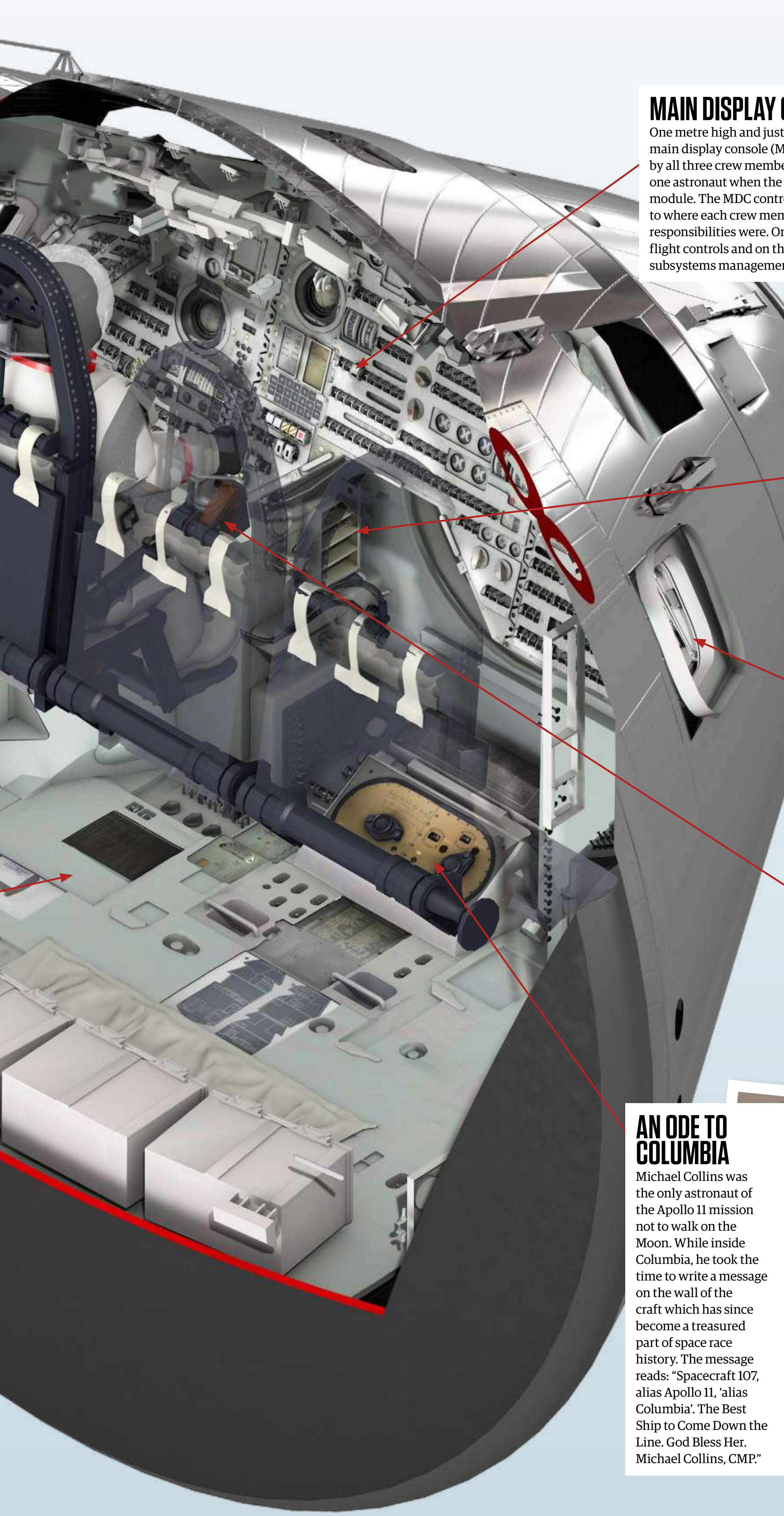
The inner structure of the Columbia housed everything the crew needed to pilot the module on their return to Earth. It also contained everything necessary for the astronauts to live, including waste management systems, equipment bays, and food and water. The compartment was 366 cubic feet, but only 210 cubic feet was available as space for the astronauts to be able to move around in.

EQUIPMENT BAYS

Throughout the command module there were several equipment bays and storage lockers. Located underneath the crew couches, the lockers held the equipment the astronauts needed to complete their mission to the Moon. Housing everything from spacesuits to food to survival kits, these lockers kept equipment out of the way as the crew piloted the module.

HEAT SHIELD

Upon re-entry of the Earth's atmosphere, the Columbia had to endure temperatures of up to 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit. To protect the module and those inside it, a heat shield made of brazed steel in a honeycomb structure filled with phenolic epoxy resin formed the entirety of the capsule's outer shell to ensure complete protection from the extreme heat.



MAIN DISPLAY CONSOLE

One metre high and just over two metres long, the main display console (MDC) was designed to be used by all three crew members, but could also be used by one astronaut when the other two were in the lunar module. The MDC controls were arranged according to where each crew member would sit and what their responsibilities were. On the left of the MDC were the flight controls and on the right were the spacecraft subsystems management controls.

TUNNEL ENTRANCE

The forward docking tunnel entrance provided a route for the crew of Apollo 11 to move between Columbia and the lunar module (the Eagle) when the two modules were docked together. Sealed with a mechanical hatch, the tunnel was used by Armstrong and Aldrin before and after their moonwalk. Another entrance was positioned on the side of Columbia, which was used by the crew to get in and out of the command module.

WINDOW

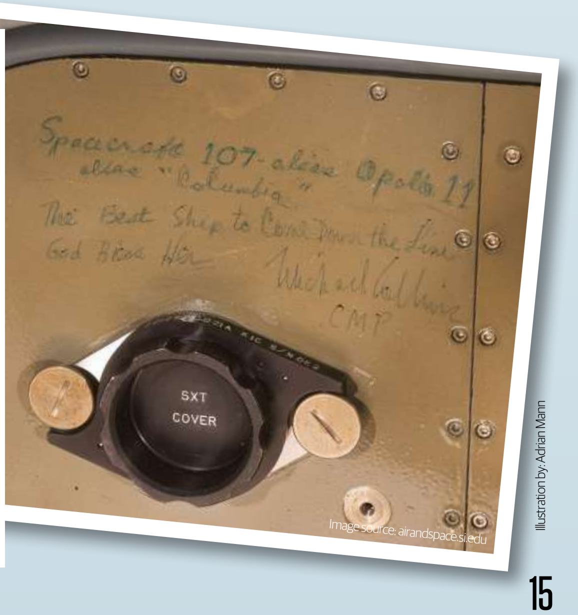
On the side hatch of the command module there was a small window. Directly facing the crew couches, the Apollo 11 astronauts would be able to see an incredible view from this window as they flew into space and towards the Moon. Michael Collins mentioned the view in a tribute he wrote to Columbia: "How could I be lonely? You have me and I have you (plus the fuel cell), and that view out the window."

COMMANDER'S CONTROLS

As mission commander of Apollo 11, Neil Armstrong was responsible for the commander's controls. These included the flight controls as well as the management controls for some of the spacecraft subsystems such as stabilisation, crew safety, Earth landing and emergency detection. Also situated with the commander's controls were one of the navigation panels and the indicators for the spacecraft's velocity, altitude and attitude.

AN ODE TO COLUMBIA

Michael Collins was the only astronaut of the Apollo 11 mission not to walk on the Moon. While inside Columbia, he took the time to write a message on the wall of the craft which has since become a treasured part of space race history. The message reads: "Spacecraft 107, alias Apollo 11, 'alias Columbia'. The Best Ship to Come Down the Line. God Bless Her. Michael Collins, CMP."



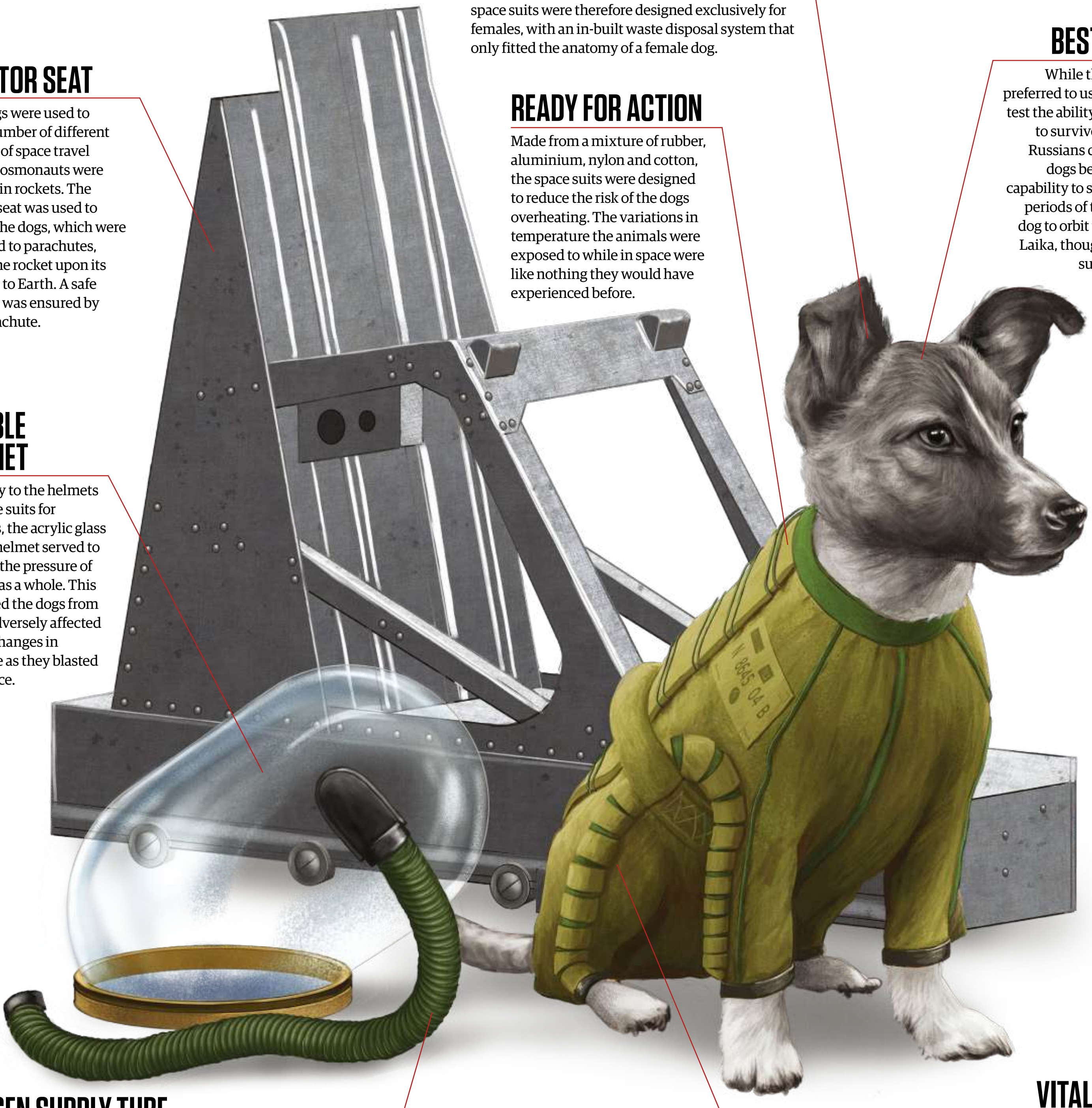
Spacecraft 107 - alias Apollo 11
alias "Columbia"
The Best Ship to Come Down the Line
God Bless Her
Michael Collins
CMP

Image source: airandspace.si.edu

Illustration by: Adrian Mann

DOG SPACE SUIT

Soviet Union
1951-66



GIRL POWER

The Soviets used female dogs because they were smaller and had a calmer temperament, and so were less likely to move around in the capsule. The space suits were therefore designed exclusively for females, with an in-built waste disposal system that only fitted the anatomy of a female dog.

EJECTOR SEAT

The dogs were used to test a number of different aspects of space travel before cosmonauts were sent up in rockets. The ejector seat was used to propel the dogs, which were attached to parachutes, out of the rocket upon its descent to Earth. A safe landing was ensured by the parachute.

MAN'S BEST FRIEND

While the Americans preferred to use monkeys to test the ability of mammals to survive in space, the Russians decided to use dogs because of their capability to sit still for long periods of time. The first dog to orbit the Earth was Laika, though she did not survive the trip.

READY FOR ACTION

Made from a mixture of rubber, aluminium, nylon and cotton, the space suits were designed to reduce the risk of the dogs overheating. The variations in temperature the animals were exposed to while in space were like nothing they would have experienced before.

BUBBLE HELMET

Similarly to the helmets on space suits for humans, the acrylic glass bubble helmet served to contain the pressure of the suit as a whole. This protected the dogs from being adversely affected by the changes in pressure as they blasted into space.

OXYGEN SUPPLY TUBE

The lack of access to oxygen for the dogs sent into space was solved by attaching an oxygen supply tube to the helmet. This ensured the dogs could survive long enough to return to Earth safely. It was initially reported that a fault in the oxygen supply is what killed Laika.

VITAL SIGNS

The dogs were fitted with monitors to track their health throughout the journey. Sometimes these sensors were fitted under the skin of the dog as well as in the suit. It is these monitors that helped scientists understand what had happened to Laika, the first dog in space, who died from over-heating within hours of the launch.

Illustration by: Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

APOLLO 11 MISSION PATCH

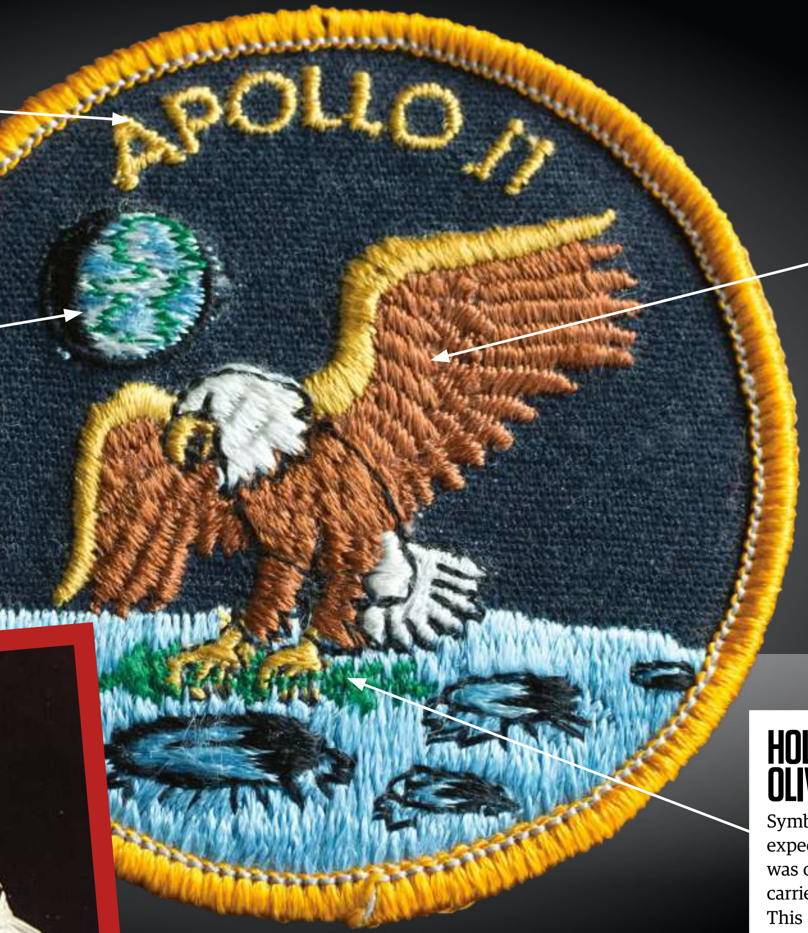
Designed by the crew of the first mission to the Moon
United States, 1969

When Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins were assigned to the Apollo 11 mission they probably envisioned spending their days putting themselves through rigorous training and planning. However, one of their first jobs was to take on a much more artistic but nevertheless historically important task - designing the mission patch for Apollo 11.

The first space mission patch was made by the Russians for the launch of the first woman into space in 1963. Underneath her orange spacesuit, Valentina Tereshkova wore a blue thermal suit with a dark blue embroidered patch on her shoulder. The patch depicted a dove and had been made by women at the Zvezda spacesuit research bureau. Although the patch was not visible to the public, it became a significant addition to the mission and to history; several space missions thereafter, in both the Soviet Union and the United States, created similar patches with unique designs to commemorate each journey into space.

In the US, Gemini V became the first American mission to have a dedicated space patch. Designed by the astronauts on the mission, Gordon Cooper and Charles Conrad, the Gemini V insignia featured both the astronauts' names, the name of the mission and a depiction of a covered wagon symbolising the pioneering venture they were undertaking. The patch was worn by Cooper and Conrad throughout their flight. Since NASA's approval of this initial patch, the crews of American missions have worn their own patches.

The tradition set by the crew of Gemini V of astronauts designing their own mission patches continued through the years. When designing the Apollo 11 patch, Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins looked to find an image that symbolised the significance of their mission that would put the first people on the Moon.



ANONYMITY

Patches of previous NASA missions had prominently featured the crew's surnames. The Apollo 11 astronauts decided against this to ensure the design represented everyone who had contributed to the first lunar landing.

EARTHLY ERROR

Collins drew the Earth behind the wings of the eagle to show the view from the lunar surface. However, from the Moon the Earth should have a shadow at the bottom rather than from the left side as Collins drew it.

THE EAGLE HAS LANDED

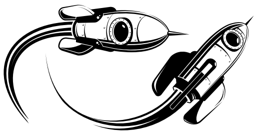
As the national bird of the US, the eagle was an appropriate central image given the significance of Apollo 11 in the space race against the Soviet Union. The eagle on the patch was traced by Collins from a *National Geographic* book.

HOLDING OUT AN OLIVE BRANCH

Symbolising a peaceful expedition, the olive branch was originally drawn being carried in the eagle's beak. This design was rejected because it was thought the eagle looked too antagonistic with its long talons. The final version has the branch being carried in the talons.

LEFT Armstrong, Collins and Aldrin designed the Apollo 11 patch and wore it on their mission

2x© Alamy



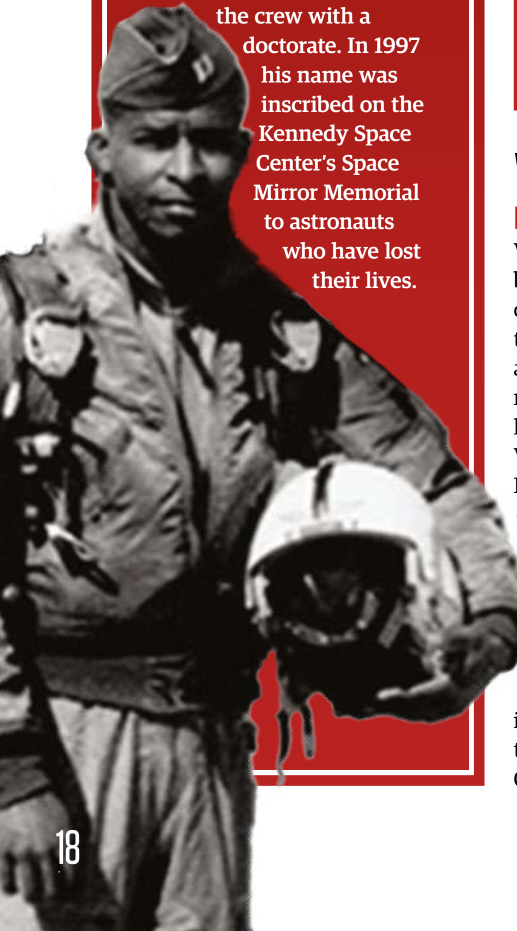
ASTRONAUTS & COSMONAUTS

Ten pioneers from both sides of the Iron Curtain who risked their lives to explore the final frontier

Robert Henry Lawrence Jr

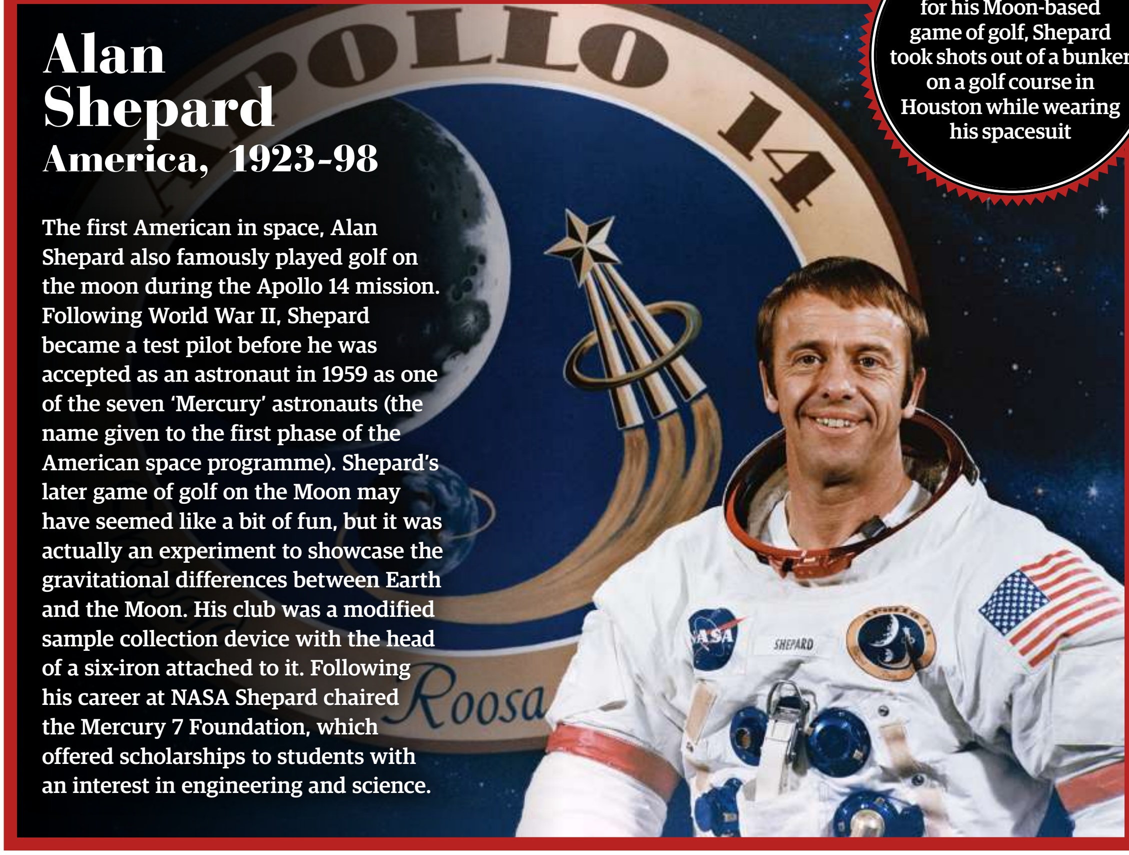
America, 1935-67

The first African-American astronaut, Robert Henry Lawrence Jr would die tragically while serving as in-flight instructor to a trainee pilot. Six months earlier he had been selected as part of the Manned Orbiting Laboratory programme, one of the most ambitious space flight programmes up until this point. Lawrence Jr was the only member of the crew with a doctorate. In 1997 his name was inscribed on the Kennedy Space Center's Space Mirror Memorial to astronauts who have lost their lives.



Alan Shepard

America, 1923-98



The first American in space, Alan Shepard also famously played golf on the moon during the Apollo 14 mission. Following World War II, Shepard became a test pilot before he was accepted as an astronaut in 1959 as one of the seven 'Mercury' astronauts (the name given to the first phase of the American space programme). Shepard's later game of golf on the Moon may have seemed like a bit of fun, but it was actually an experiment to showcase the gravitational differences between Earth and the Moon. His club was a modified sample collection device with the head of a six-iron attached to it. Following his career at NASA Shepard chaired the Mercury 7 Foundation, which offered scholarships to students with an interest in engineering and science.

In order to prepare for his Moon-based game of golf, Shepard took shots out of a bunker on a golf course in Houston while wearing his spacesuit

VALERY BYKOVSKY

RUSSIA, 1934 – 2019

Valery Bykovsky began his cosmonaut training in 1960 and made his name two years later piloting the Vostok 5 mission (14-19 June 1963). During this mission Bykovsky earned the distinction of having the longest solo space flight (nearly five days in orbit) – a record that still stands. Bykovsky made two further flights, in 1976 and 1978. He left the cosmonaut programme in 1988 and served as director of the House of Soviet Science and Culture in Berlin until 1990.

TOM STAFFORD

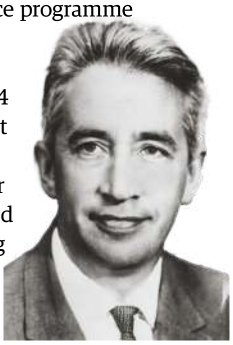
AMERICA, 1930 – PRESENT

Leading the American portion of the Apollo-Soyuz mission was Thomas Stafford, who flew on numerous missions. In 1962 Stafford had been among the second group of astronauts and in 1965 piloted Gemini 6 in the first rendezvous in space. In 1969 he commanded Apollo 10 and completed the first flight of the lunar module to the Moon, descending to 15km above the surface.

KONSTANTIN FEOKTISTOV

RUSSIA, 1926 – 2009

At 16, Feoktistov was captured during WWII and sentenced to death. Shot through the neck, he feigned death and escaped. Following the end of the war he worked in the space programme as a designer of spacecraft and equipment. In 1964 he became the first scientist in space, on Vokshod 1, after which he continued designing, working on the Salyut space station programme.



Valentina Tereshkova

Russia, 1937 – present

Valentina Tereshkova was employed as a textile worker when she was selected to become a cosmonaut, one of five women. On 16 June 1963 she began a three-day flight, becoming the first woman (and civilian) in space. She has held a number of important political positions, including serving as an official head of state in the Soviet Union prior to its collapse. In 1996 she was elected a member of the World Peace Council. She still holds the title of the youngest woman to go into space.

ALEXI LEONOV

RUSSIA, 1934 – 2019

Noted for being the first person to walk in outer space and also for shaking hands with Tom Stafford during the Apollo-Soyuz joint mission of 1975, Leonov was attached to a number of Soviet space missions. During his historic space walk his suit became rigid and he realised he would not be able to re-enter the airlock. Without gaining clearance he opened the oxygen valves, clearly an incredibly dangerous thing to do, reducing the pressure inside so that he could enter.

BUZZ ALDRIN

AMERICA, 1930 – PRESENT

The second man on the moon, Aldrin was the first US astronaut with a doctorate and designed docking and rendezvous techniques for the NASA space programme. He also championed the use of underwater training for astronauts in order to simulate space walking. Since retiring from NASA he has become a champion of space travel and has written numerous books for adults and children alike, as well as being named a member of the space advisory committee.

Yuri Gagarin

Russia, 1934-68

Yuri Gagarin began his flight training in 1955 and gained his pilot's wings two years later. When the Soviet government began a nationwide selection process for the first man into space, Gagarin was one of 20 possible candidates. He soon became the favoured choice and in April 1961 undertook the historic flight. Following the mission he became a celebrity in the USSR and attempts were made to keep him away from making further flights in case a useful propaganda tool were to perish in a crash. On 27 March 1968, in a routine training flight, that was exactly what happened and the cosmonaut was placed in the Kremlin Wall Necropolis.

In order to pass pilot school, Gagarin had to sit on a cushion in order to see out of the cockpit

Neil Armstrong

America, 1930 – 2012

The first man to walk on the Moon, Neil Armstrong's contribution to the space race goes beyond his famous 1969 mission. Armstrong was first selected to be an astronaut in 1962 and in 1966 he served as the commander of the Gemini 8 mission, which saw the first successful docking of two spacecraft. Following the Moon landing, Armstrong served for two years as deputy administrator for aeronautics at NASA headquarters. After leaving NASA in 1971, he taught as a professor of aerospace engineering at the University of Cincinnati and served as chairman of Computing Technologies for Aviation Inc.

NASA
ARMSTRONG

It is suspected that Neil Armstrong intended to say 'one small step for *a* man' but flubbed his lines and omitted the 'a'

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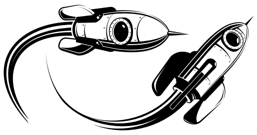


NASA AND THE COLD WAR

NASA's chief historian Brian Odom discusses the agency's role in the space race, the Apollo programme and its impact

What was the 'space race'?

It depends on the period that you're addressing, but most people are really talking about the [John F] Kennedy administration into the [Lyndon B] Johnson administration – the 1960s. I think you have to separate out Sputnik, although the space race resulted from the fear it instilled in the American public, but the space race was really a race to the Moon. Kennedy wanted to get to the Moon first as it would be a great propaganda coup. In the global South, you had a lot of countries becoming independent from former colonial powers. What system would they follow? Would they follow the US liberal democracy or would they follow the Soviet example of communism? These two ideological systems were in conflict with each other and Kennedy saw the race to the Moon as a way to demonstrate American technological power and the benefit of one system over another.

How much was the foundation of NASA a response to the launching of Sputnik by the USSR and, by extension, the space race?

[President Dwight D] Eisenhower's chief problem during this period was which branch of the military would be responsible for developing a launch vehicle. This was problematic because it put the various branches in competition with each other. When Sputnik launched, Eisenhower wasn't that concerned about it, he didn't see it as an existential threat. He saw it for what it was: the Soviet Union launching a transmitter into orbit. But the American public saw it differently because they saw it as part of a larger Cold War competition. When Eisenhower opened NASA for business on 1 October 1958 he was really trying to disentangle all the military branches from being in competition with each other and move space exploration into a government agency dedicated to peaceful, open communication instead of directly responding to Sputnik.

NASA's acting chief historian, Brian Odom, has worked at NASA for ten years. Having studied at both the University of Alabama and Middle Tennessee State University, he is a doctor of philosophy and public history. He is the co-editor of *NASA and the Long Civil Rights Movement*.

What was NASA like in its early years?

In those early years, particularly 1958-1961, NASA was working to understand what its overall programme would be. What were its priorities? Where would it apply the majority of its funding? There was a goal to put a man in space, which would be achieved with Alan Shepard's flight, but there was also a huge element of NASA that was thinking 'what are the scientific questions that this agency is going to answer'? Questions like 'what can we do with satellites in space?' It was kind of a wild west, it was trying to figure out what it wanted to be. Following Shepard's flight in May 1961, it became very clear that the space race was continuing. President Kennedy committed to the lunar programme, and once that commitment was made the resources came with it. NASA's attention for the next seven or eight years was focused on putting a man on the Moon.

How dangerous were those early years of spaceflight compared to more recent missions?

One thing to stress is that space exploration has not gotten easier. The challenges that were there in the very

RIGHT Celebrations in NASA mission control following the Apollo 11 Moon landing

Photo courtesy of: Brian Odom

RIGHT The Apollo 11 launch was the target Kennedy had set out for NASA

BELOW President Kennedy takes a look inside the Mercury capsule in 1962

BOTTOM The crew of Apollo 1 – Gus Grissom, Edward White and Roger Chaffee – who died in a tragic accident during a launch rehearsal

beginning are still the challenges that we face today. Yes, they were developing new systems and putting human beings at the top of rockets that were built for nuclear delivery systems [the Mercury and Gemini programmes] but what we've learned over the decades of space exploration is that it hasn't gotten easier. Remember the Challenger accident in 1986, the Columbia accident in 2003. Space is still very, very challenging and dangerous. It hasn't gotten easier, but we've learned a lot over the decades

How significant a victory was the Moon landing?

That's a good question, and as historians it's something that we are still debating. I think the Moon landing really resonates more today in terms of the propaganda aspect; it was a huge achievement. The incredible achievement of building the technological systems that could enable you to do this, to land human beings on the Moon and return safely. But did the actual landing on the Moon achieve Kennedy's goal of demonstrating the superiority of one set of institutions over another? I think historians still debate that question. That doesn't lessen the achievement, but the idea of the Moon landing as a victory over the Soviets? That's a great question.

How much can we consider NASA and its achievements to be products of the Cold War?

We can't forget about the Cold War context for all this activity and the seemingly existential threat of the Soviet Union. As an historian looking at this from a contextual standpoint, I can tell you that I don't think Kennedy would've committed to going to the Moon without the race between the US and the Soviet Union. Without the Apollo programme, how far and how quickly would our technology have advanced to the point it is at today? The Cold War made the Moon landing a priority in Kennedy's mind and his commitment to it really did change America and American technology. People who were influenced by the space race went to college to engage in science and mathematics to be part of something like this. They may not all have contributed to the space programme, but they went on to contribute in many other fields. So without the space race and the Apollo programme what's the impact on these fields? It's difficult to say if there had been no Apollo programme, how the world would have changed.

All images: © Alamy

SPACE MUSEUMS

Five of the finest museums containing objects and items dedicated to the space race

1 KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

FLORIDA, USA

One of ten NASA field centres, the Kennedy Space Center officially opened on 26 May 1965 and is a historic site for any space travel fan. The site was acquired when it was discovered that the home of America's space missions up to that point, Cape Canaveral, was not big enough to support a rocket large enough to put a man on the Moon. Since then it has been the launch site for all manned US space flights, including such famous missions as Apollo and Skylab.

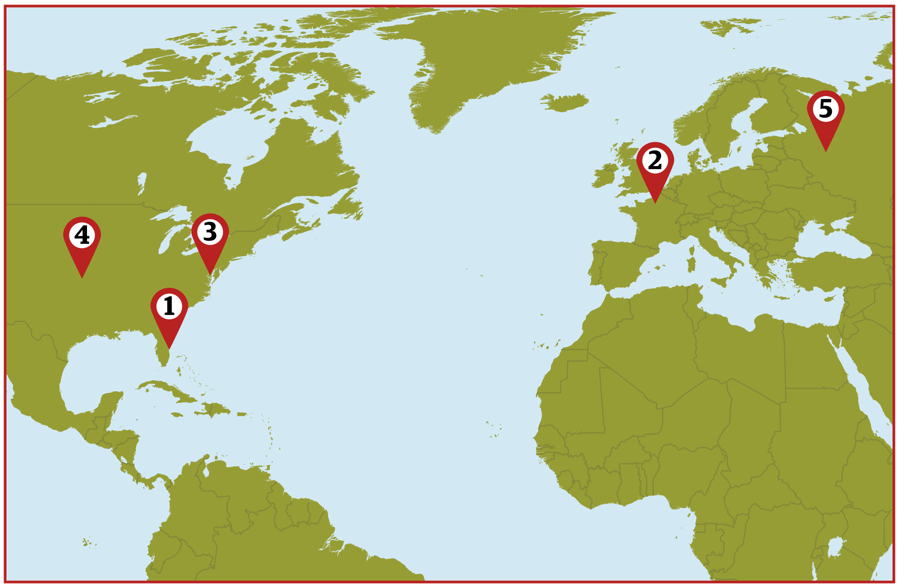
Following the popularity of the Mercury space programme, James Webb (the then-administrator of NASA) was instructed to create self-guided public tours on which visitors could drive along a preordained route. By 1964 250,000 cars had been admitted and in response a huge visitor centre was created in order to cater to the vast public interest. The Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex is home to a number of attractions including the rocket garden, which contains a number of real rockets related to historic missions; the US Astronaut Hall of Fame; the Apollo/Saturn V centre, which contains a restored Saturn rocket; and the Shuttle launch experience, a vast simulator.

The Kennedy Space Center is a must visit for anyone interested in the history of the space race, not just for its many artefacts but also because of its own significance during the space programmes of the 1960s.

Open all year from 9am-5pm, and until 6pm during the peak season of 4-24 April

The Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex hosts many historic space craft

UNITED STATES
LM



2 NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM

PARIS, FRANCE

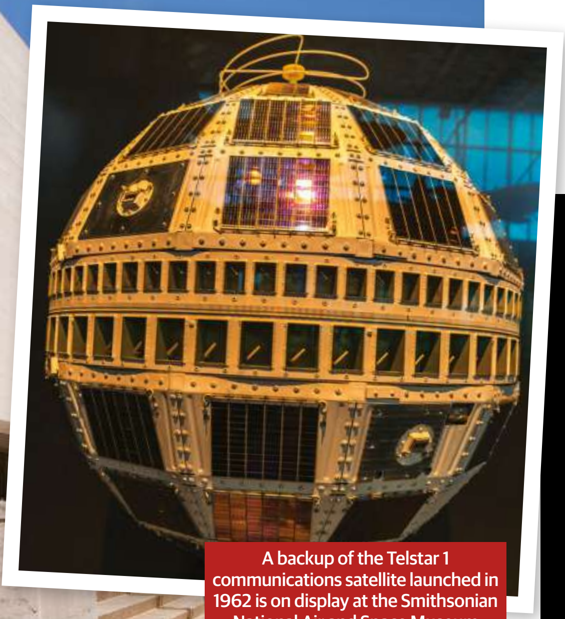
Visitors can learn about France's often-overlooked role in the space race

PARIS LE BOURGET
MUSEE DE L'AIR

In 1961 French President Charles De Gaulle created the National Centre for Space Studies, giving birth to Frances's space programme. However, when discussing the space race, France's role in it is often forgotten in a narrative that focuses on the two superpowers. Located at Paris Le Bourget airport, one of Europe's leading business airports, the National Air and Space Museum of France is the oldest aeronautical museum in the world and contains a wealth of items related to the space race and France's role in it. Most notably, visitors can see a replica of Astérix I, the first French satellite into space, which unfortunately transmitted for just two days before going silent. The museum also contains artefacts from later in the history of France's space programme, including items from the first Frenchman into space, Jean-Loup Chrétien. Among these are a Soyuz T-6 capsule and his original spacesuit. The museum also contains items relating to both the US and Soviet Union's space missions.

Open 1 October to 31 March, Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-5pm; and April 1 to September 30, Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-6pm

Smithsonian Institution
National Air and Space Museum



A backup of the Telstar 1 communications satellite launched in 1962 is on display at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum

3 SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM

WASHINGTON DC, USA

Containing the world's largest collection of space and aviation artefacts, the United States National Air and Space Museum opened in Washington DC in 1976 at the Smithsonian Institute and is said to be the fourth most-visited museum in the world. The museum has a permanent gallery dedicated to the space race, which contains among a variety of fascinating items the original Skylab orbital workshop and the Hubble Space Telescope, as well as space suits and other paraphernalia. The exhibits go right back to the origins of the space race, with German V1 and V2 rockets among the various items on display. This gallery also contains numerous military objects related to the Cold War, including a Minuteman III missile and a test flight version of a Tomahawk cruise missile that flew in four tests between 1976 and 1978. Perhaps most excitingly, the museum is noted for its impressive collection of artefacts relating to the Apollo missions and in particular the Moon landing in 1969. Here you can view the original Apollo 11 command module, which was transferred to the museum in 1971, as well as Neil Armstrong's pressure suit worn during the same mission. This exhibition toured in 2019 for the anniversary of the landing but is now back at the museum, ready for its reopening in the coming months.

The museum is due to reopen in autumn 2022

4 COSMOSPHERE

KANSAS, USA

The Cosmosphere began in 1962 when Patty Carey obtained a used planetarium projector and, after setting up some folding chairs in Kansas State Fairgrounds Poultry Building, successfully created one of America's first Planetariums. Due to its immense popularity it was first given a permanent home at the Hutchinson Community College before being moved to the specially constructed Cosmosphere building in 1980, with a vast addition in 1995 providing a huge exhibition and museum space. The Cosmosphere's Hall of Space Museum contains the largest combined collection of US and Russian artefacts in the world, making it a must visit for any space race fanatic. Among objects of interest are Sputnik I's flight-ready back-up and Sputnik II engineering model as well as the lunar sphere, the first man-made object to impact the lunar surface. The Cosmosphere also includes artefacts related to the cold war, including a section of the Berlin wall.

The Cosmosphere's exhibition relating to the achievements of the USSR

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Open 9am-7pm Fridays and Saturdays, 9am-5pm the rest of the week. See cosmo.org/visit/tickets

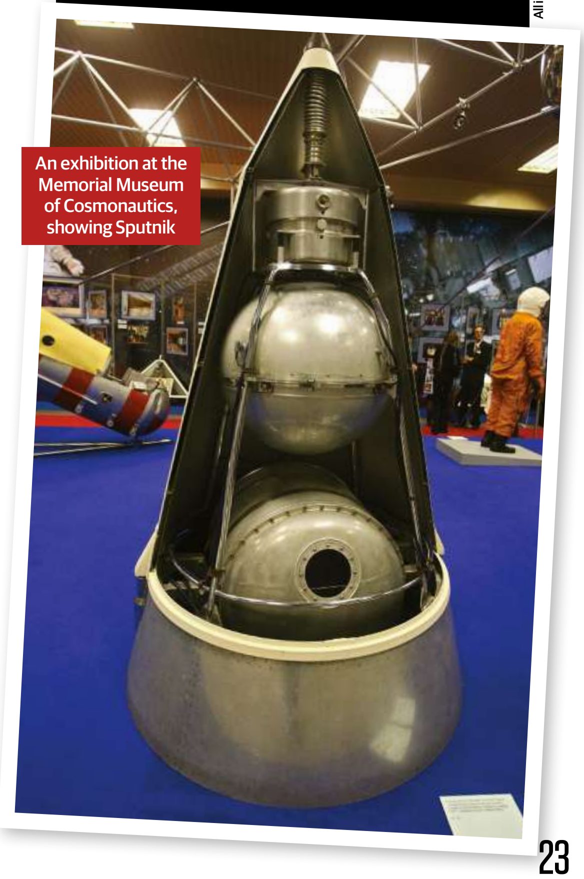
5 MEMORIAL MUSEUM OF COSMONAUTICS

MOSCOW, RUSSIA

Although we would not encourage any of our readers to attempt to travel to Russia during the current political climate, the significance of the items on display at the Memorial Museum of Cosmonautics in Moscow make it worthy of inclusion on this list. Among the most awe-inspiring of these include the original capsule used by Yuri Gagarin during his historic 1961 space flight. Perhaps some of the most bizarre items on display are the preserved bodies of Belka and Strelka, the first dogs to survive a trip into space. The museum, which underwent extensive renovation before being re-opened in 2009, is located underneath the Monument to the Conquerors of Space, a vast obelisk-like statue erected in 1964 that depicts a rocket rising into the sky with its exhaust plume beneath it.

Open from 10am-7pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday; and from 10am-9pm on Thursday and Saturday

An exhibition at the Memorial Museum of Cosmonautics, showing Sputnik



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GREEK GODS

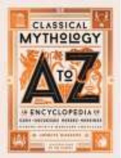
Uncover the origins of the Olympian deities and how they shaped Ancient Greek culture

Written by Annette Giesecke

According to Herodotus it was the poets Homer and Hesiod, writing in the 8th century BCE, who gave the Greeks their gods. Herodotus, who lived in the 5th century BCE, was himself a Greek from the city of Halicarnassus in what is now Turkey. He was right about Homer and Hesiod, or more properly, the works attributed to them. Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, together with Hesiod's *Theogony*, are the oldest existing works of literature in the Western world. In both of these book-length poems, all the major gods appear as characters with distinct personalities and powers. In his *Theogony*, which translates as '*Origin of the Gods*', Hesiod explains how exactly the Greek gods came into being. Hesiod's divine-creation myth is also a cosmogony, a story of the origins of Nature and the Universe. The first gods were elemental. They were deified physical parts of the Universe, but they gradually became anthropomorphised, believed - at least sometimes - to have human emotions and form. Zeus, Hera, Aphrodite, Poseidon and the other familiar Olympian gods did not at first exist, only coming into being after the creation of Earth and Sky, which also were considered gods.

EXPERT BIO

ANNETTE GIESECKE



Annette Giesecke is Professor of Classics and Chair of Ancient Greek and Roman Studies at the University of Delaware. She is the author of *Classical Mythology A to Z: An Encyclopedia of Gods & Goddesses, Heroes & Heroines, Nymphs, Spirits, Monsters and Places* (Black Dog & Leventhal, 2020).

CREATION MYTH

According to Hesiod, the Universe existed first as a vast nothingness, a vacant space for which the Greek word is 'Chaos'. From Chaos arose Gaia, who was conceived both as our planet Earth and as a great mother goddess. More primordial elemental gods would follow. Eros, the force of desire, also arose from Chaos, and next came Erebos (Darkness) and Nyx ▶

Illustration by Kevin McGivern

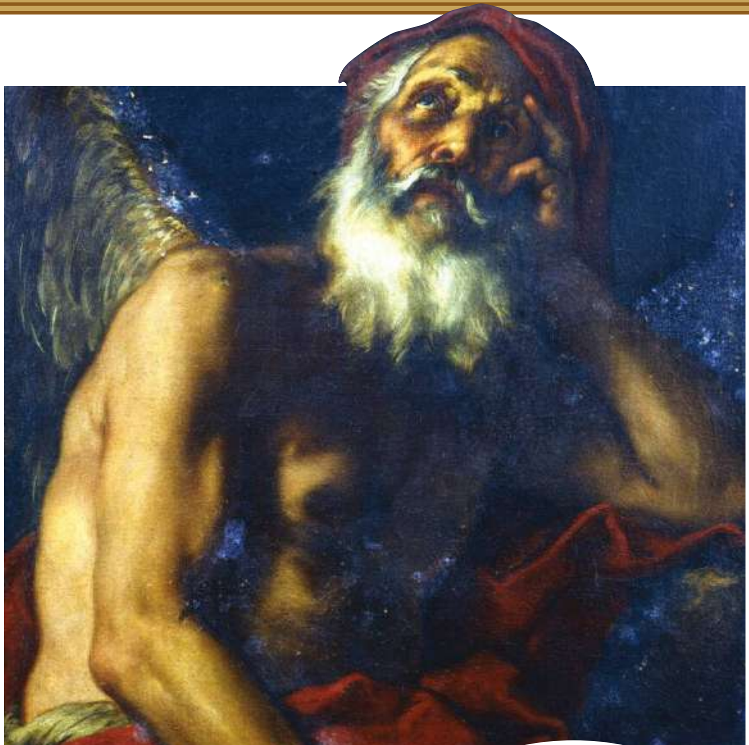
(Night). Erebos and Nyx together bore Aether (the bright upper sky) and Hemera (Day). Wanting companionship and protection, Gaia herself produced Ouranos (Sky) to cover her on all sides.

Gaia and Ouranos became the parents of three sets of offspring. The first to be born were the twelve Titans, the best known of whom are Okeanos (the great river encircling Earth), Rhea and Kronos. Next came three strong and violent Cyclopes, each with a single circular eye. Last came three Hekatoncheires (Hundred-Handers), who, apart from having a hundred arms, each had 50 heads.

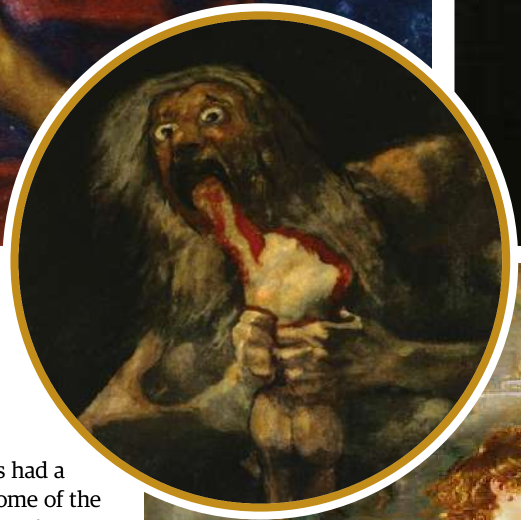
Ouranos detested his monster-children and, at the moment they were born, pressed them back inside their mother, causing her unspeakable outrage and pain. Gaia approached her Titan children, asking them for help, but none had the courage apart from the youngest, Kronos. Armed with a sickle that his mother had given him, Kronos castrated his father when he came to lie with his mother at night, leaving Kronos the most powerful of the gods. Yet, even maimed, the super-fertile Ouranos continued to produce offspring. The Erinyes (spirits of Vengeance), the fully-armed Giants, and the Melian tree nymphs sprang from blood that his wound dripped onto Earth. From the froth where his severed genitals fell into the sea arose Aphrodite, goddess of desire and beauty. Ouranos, for his part, vowed his vengeance.

The Titan brothers and sisters had a great many children together, some of the most notable being Helios (Sun), Selene (Moon), Eos (Dawn), Nike (Victory) and Eris (Strife). Among the gods, incest was never taboo. The Titan Kronos took his sister Rhea as his wife. Kronos and Rhea's children were Hestia (goddess of the hearth), Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon and Zeus, last to be born. But Kronos had learned that one of his children was destined to overthrow him, so he swallowed each of them as they were born, apart from Zeus. By the time her youngest was to be born, a distressed Rhea had devised a ruse by which to trick her mate. She quickly substituted a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes for the infant Zeus, and Kronos was none the wiser. Zeus, meanwhile, was taken to Crete where he was raised by his grandmother Gaia. It was Gaia who devised a plan later used by a fully grown Zeus to cause his father to disgorge his siblings.

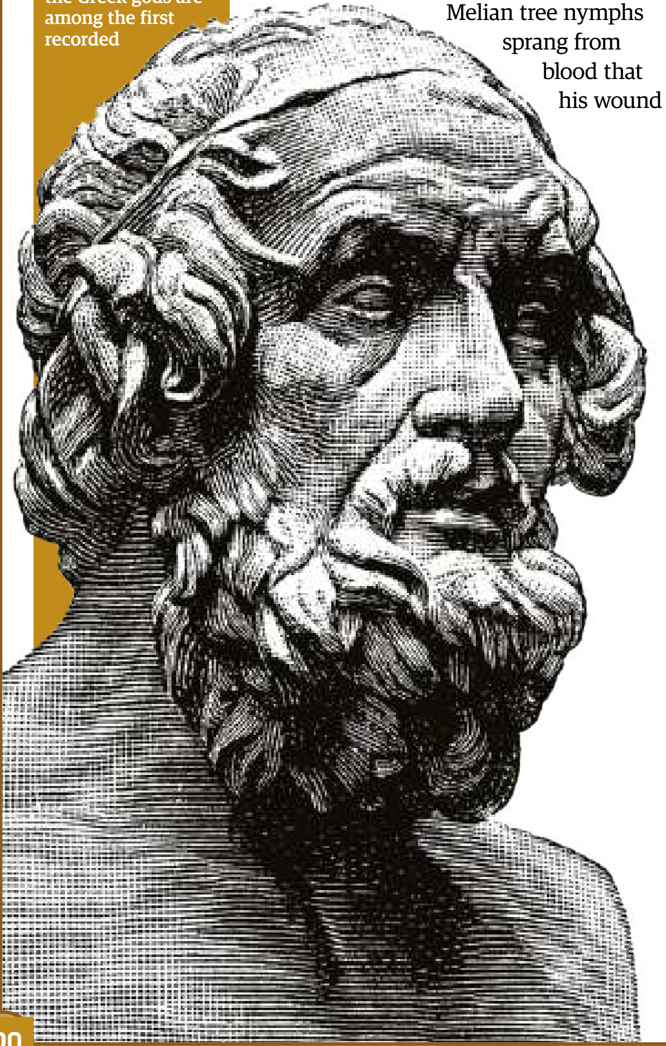
Zeus and his freed family took up residence on Mount Olympus, its peak so high that the mountain linked Heaven and Earth, and consequently became known as the Olympian gods. A power



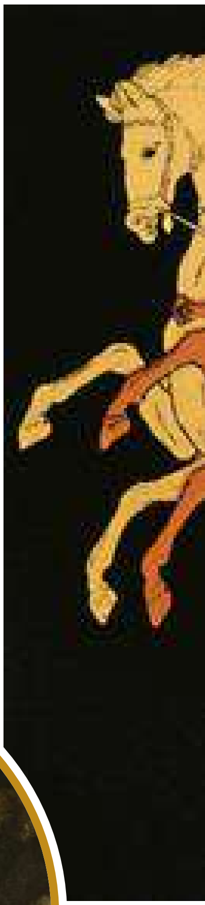
RIGHT Kronos was one of the Titans in Greek mythology and the father of Zeus, among others

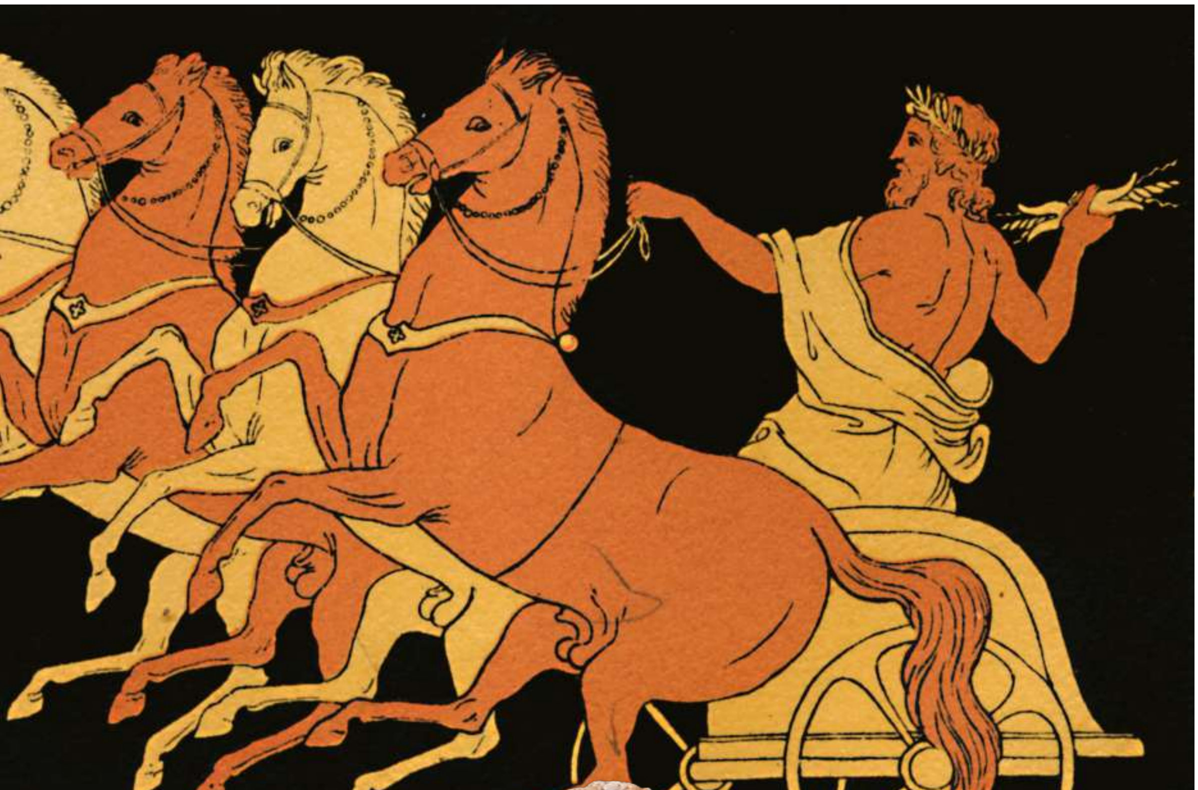


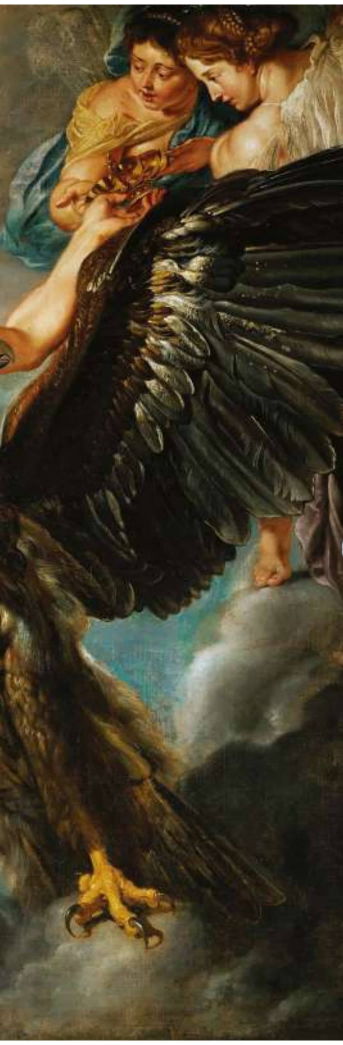
RIGHT-INSET Goya's painting of Saturn, the Roman name for Ouranos, devouring his son



BELOW Homer's descriptions of the Greek gods are among the first recorded







"ZEUS WAS INTRODUCED TO GREECE BY INDO-EUROPEAN MIGRANTS"

struggle eventually ensued between the older Titans and the new generation of Olympian gods with Zeus at the lead. With help from the Cyclopes and Hekatoncheires, whom he had released from confinement inside Earth, Zeus prevailed in the devastating, decade-long battle. The next challenge he faced came from Typhoeus, Gaia's last child. This was a fearsome monster with a hundred hissing snake heads. When Zeus again was victorious, his siblings urged him to become their king and to assign them spheres of influence. Zeus, his siblings and his offspring would now become the principal gods of the Greeks.

ZEUS

In Greek mythology and religion, Zeus was considered 'Lord of gods and humanity', whose name means 'the bright one'. He was introduced to Greece by Indo-European migrants, likely from the steppeland between the Black and Caspian Seas. His cult, which took precedence over that of an existing Earth mother-goddess, was established in Greece by the 2nd millennium BCE. Called 'the cloud-gatherer', he was the god of the sky and of weather phenomena including rain, thunder and lightning. Reflecting these powers, his symbols were thunderbolts, which were made for him by the Cyclopes and could be used as powerful weapons, and the eagle, most majestic of birds. In addition to being the sky god, Zeus was an important civic god, ensuring that cities were lawfully governed and the households of their citizens were safe.

According to Hesiod, Zeus first took the second-generation Titan goddess Metis (Wisdom) as his wife. A prophecy foretold that Metis would bear him children who would overpower him, so Zeus, wishing to prevent this, swallowed his pregnant wife. After a time, Zeus developed a terrible headache, and when Hephaistos, god of the forge, split open his head with an axe to relieve the pain, the goddess Athena leaped out fully grown and fully armed.

Athena was far from the last child of Zeus, as he had an infamously roving eye, much to the irritation of Hera, his sister and second wife. In fact, depending on the sources consulted, he fathered about 100 children, some with goddesses and some with mortal women. For example, Persephone, who would become Hades' queen, was Zeus' daughter with his sister Demeter. Zeus impregnated the Titan goddess Leto with the twin deities Apollo and Artemis. Semele, a mortal woman, was the mother of Dionysos. Hermes, the messenger god, was his son by Maia, a second-generation Titan. Zeus' 'legitimate' children with Hera were Ares, god of war, and the lesser deities Hebe (Youth) and Eileithyia (goddess of childbirth). Zeus' other numerous children included the heroes Achilles, whose mother was the sea goddess Thetis, and Heracles, who was born of Alcmene, his own grand-daughter.

HERA

Zeus' queen was his sister Hera. Whether or not Hera was a native Greek goddess or an import from other cultures has not been definitively established. It is likely that, like the other Greek female goddesses, she evolved from a Stone Age Earth-mother-goddess who was widely worshipped in the Mediterranean region. However, clay tablets found in Bronze Age archives at Pylos and Thebes in southern

TOP Zeus' chariot was pulled by the four winds as horses

MIDDLE-LEFT Eagles were not only messengers of Zeus, but also one of the animals he transformed into

LEFT Zeus is typically depicted with a thunderbolt, sceptre and eagle, representing his power and wisdom

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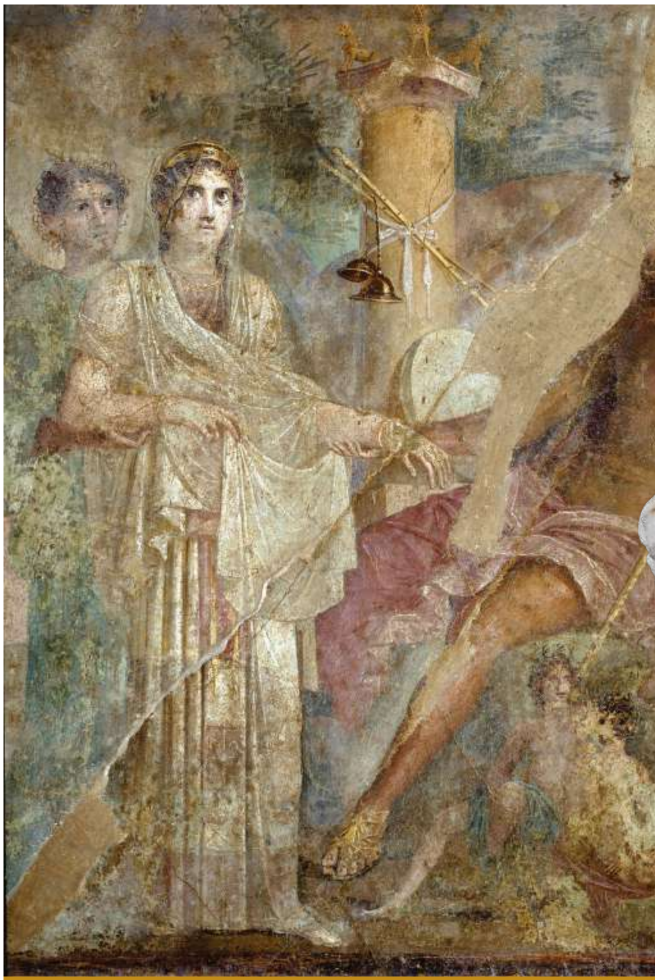
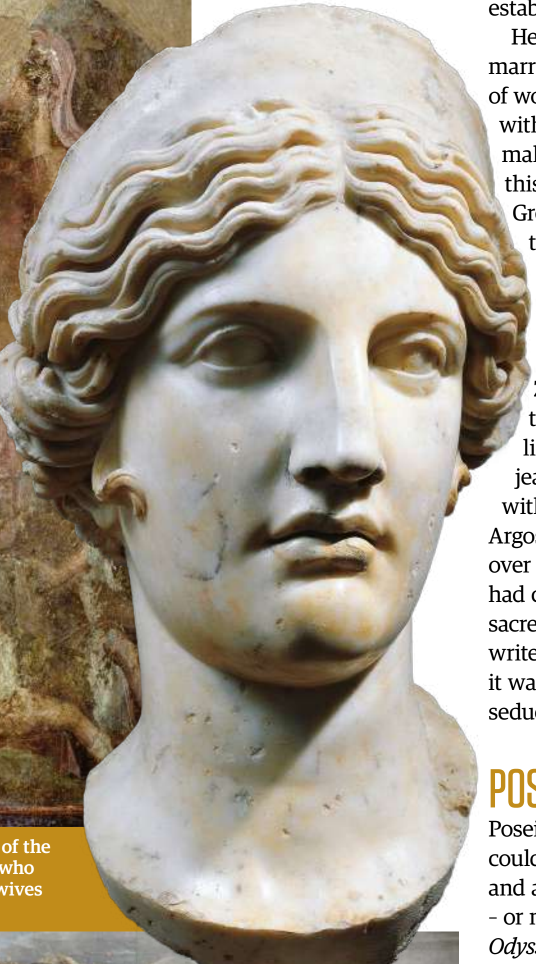
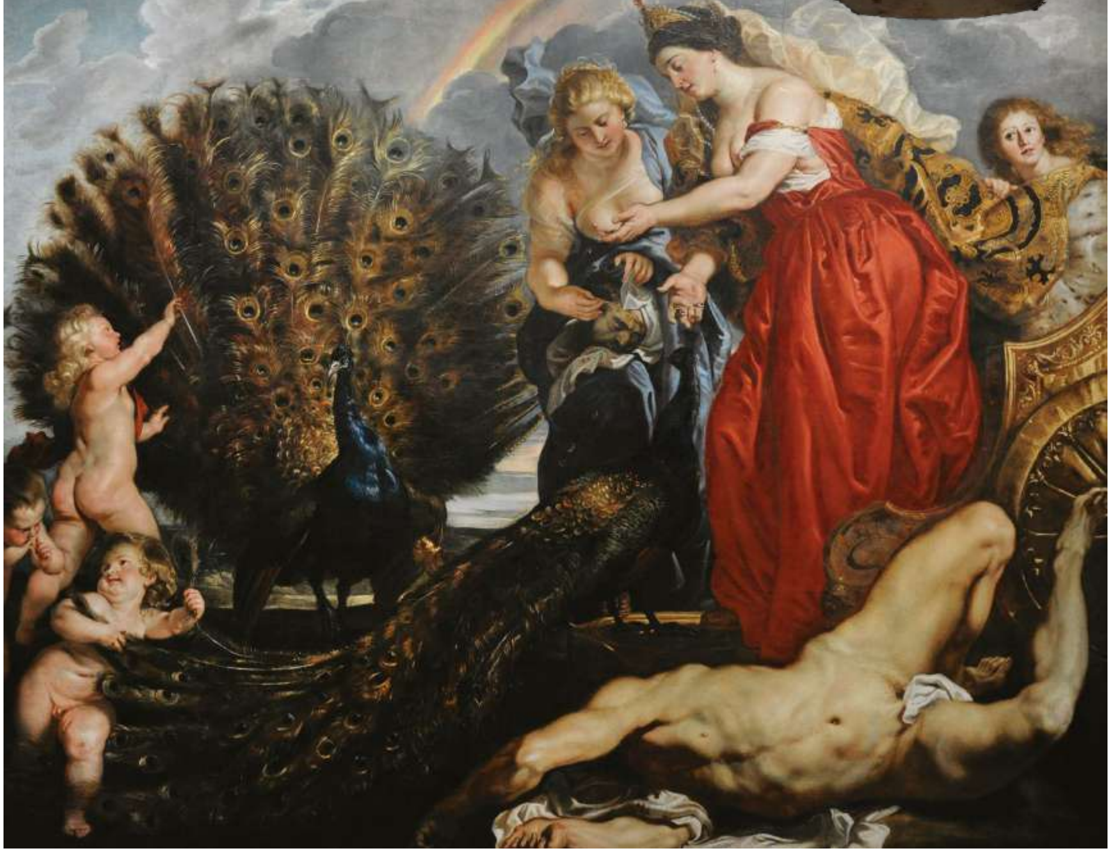




ABOVE A fresco of the wedding of Hera and Zeus found in Pompeii

BELOW The peacock became the symbol of Hera and her desire to keep an eye on Zeus

RIGHT A bust of the goddess Hera, who watched over wives and mothers



Greece reveal that the worship of Hera, as well as her association with Zeus, was established by the 2nd millennium BCE.

Hera was the goddess of childbirth and marriage and, by extension, the protector of women as wives and mothers. Myrtle, with its fragrant flowers, was used to make bridal wreaths and was sacred to this goddess. Hera also watched over Greek cities and other settlements together with their inhabitants. In mythology, Hera is perhaps best remembered for her jealousy over Zeus' many love affairs and her persecution of Heracles, one of Zeus' illegitimate sons. The story of the peacock, Hera's sacred bird, was likewise linked with the goddess' jealousy. The goddess decorated its tail with the hundred eyes of the monstrous Argos, whom she had stationed as a guard over Callisto, one of the fair maidens that had caught lusty Zeus' fancy. Another bird sacred to her was the cuckoo. As the travel writer Pausanias (2nd century CE) wrote, it was disguised as this bird that Zeus first seduced her.

POSEIDON

Poseidon was the Lord of the Sea, who could both stir up and calm the surf, and as such he could be the protector – or nemesis – of mariners. In Homer's *Odyssey*, it was Poseidon in his anger who ensured that the hero Odysseus spent a decade at sea trying to get home to Ithaka from Troy. Poseidon was also the god of earthquakes, who caused the earth to shake when he struck it with his trident; and horses, which were highly prized by the Greeks, were especially sacred to him. The winged horse Pegasus, who was born from the Gorgon Medusa's neck when the hero Perseus decapitated her, was his son, according to Greek myth.

Poseidon was one of the oldest Greek gods, and logically one of the most significant for a seafaring people. As in the case of Zeus and Hera, it is certain that he was worshipped in Greece by the 2nd millennium BCE, as his name, too, has appeared on inscribed clay tablets dating to the Bronze Age. It is possible that Poseidon, if not a native Greek deity, represents a fusion of Indo-European and indigenous sea gods.

HADES

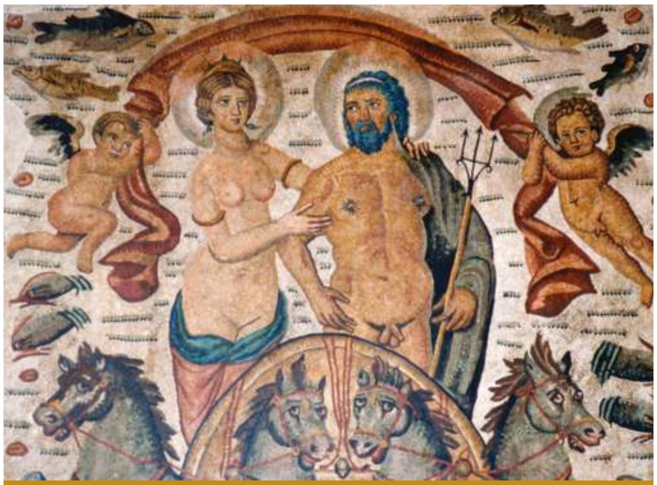
Hades, God of the Underworld and Lord of Death, was not often depicted in Greek art, as his realm and powers were feared. The name Hades may mean

'Unseen One', appropriately for the Dark Lord. However, this god was also called Pluton in the Greek world. Pluton, which is Pluto in Latin, translates as 'Wealthy One', and ancient authors offered various explanations for this. The philosopher Plato, writing in the 5th century BCE, believed that Pluton was a euphemism and that the name referred to the fact that riches, such as precious metals, are derived from beneath the Earth's surface, where Hades lived. Alternatively, as the author Lucian (who lived around 125-180 CE) explained in his diatribe entitled *On Grief* (*de Luctu*), Hades was the wealthy one because he received not only corpses but also abundant grave goods and offerings when a person died.

ATHENA

Athena, the goddess of wisdom and defensive war was also the patron goddess of craftspeople including weavers, potters and metalworkers. She was the only goddess to be depicted fully armed, wearing a helmet and breastplate and carrying a spear. A goddess whose powers included the protection of all Greek cities, Athena had a special relationship with the city of Athens. Whether the goddess gave her name to the city, or the city gave its name to the goddess, is uncertain. The earliest record of her name, which dates to approximately 1400 BCE, appears to mean 'Lady of Athens', suggesting that the city came before the goddess.

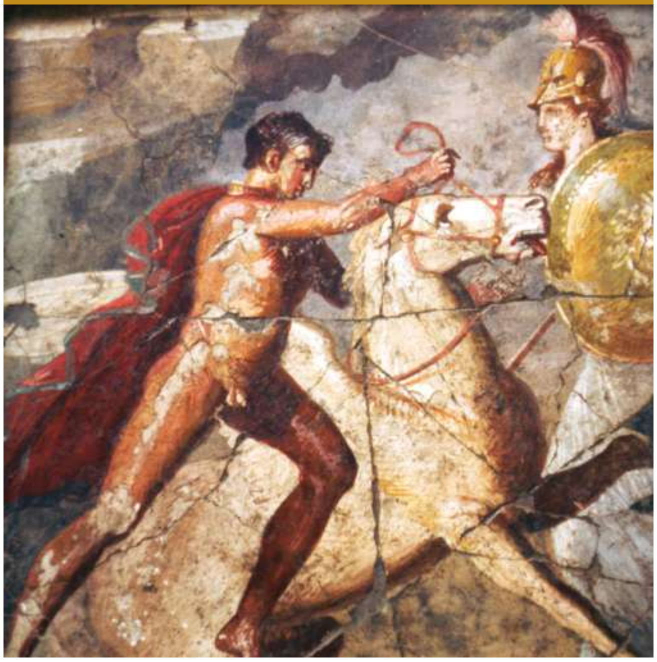
Becoming patron deity of Athens was a distinction for which Athena had to fight, since Poseidon also desired this honour.



ABOVE Poseidon was a particularly important god to the Greeks given the importance of the sea to their economy

BELOW Pegasus is said to have sprung from the neck of Medusa when she was killed

BELOW-RIGHT Poseidon, god of the sea, could stir up the water into storms or calm it

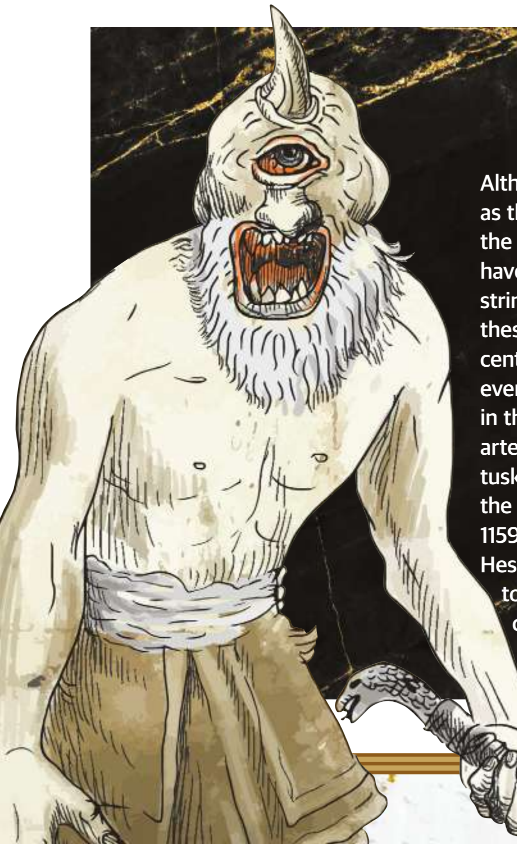


"WHETHER ATHENA GAVE HER NAME TO THE CITY OF ATHENS, OR THE CITY GAVE ITS NAME TO THE GODDESS, IS UNCERTAIN"

A contest between the gods was arranged, according to Greek mythology. Poseidon struck the Acropolis with his pitchfork and a salt spring erupted from the cleft in the rock. This spring symbolised the city's prospective naval power. Next Athena struck the earth with her spear, producing the first olive tree. The Athenians judged the olive to be the more valuable gift, and it would come to pass that olive oil was a mainstay of the Athenian economy.

DEMETER

Demeter was the goddess of grain, agriculture and the harvest. The etymology of her name remains disputed, ▶



TELLING TALES

Were Homer and Hesiod retelling older stories?

Although Homer is known as the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, he may actually have been the last in a long string of poets who recited these epic poems orally over centuries, reshaping them with every telling. Some language in the poems, as well as some artefacts described, like boars' tusk helmets, can be dated to the Bronze Age (circa 3000 – 1159 BCE). The same is true of Hesiod and the works attributed to him. It may also be the case, as some scholars have persuasively argued, that Homer and Hesiod were fabricated culture heroes and that the works we now have preserved in writing should be viewed as the creation of a collective of oral poets. Just as there are no certain biographical facts about either poet, there are no portraits of them dating to their traditional lifetime. The many portrait busts in existence were based on later imaginings of the poets' appearances. Interestingly, both were imagined as having been blind.

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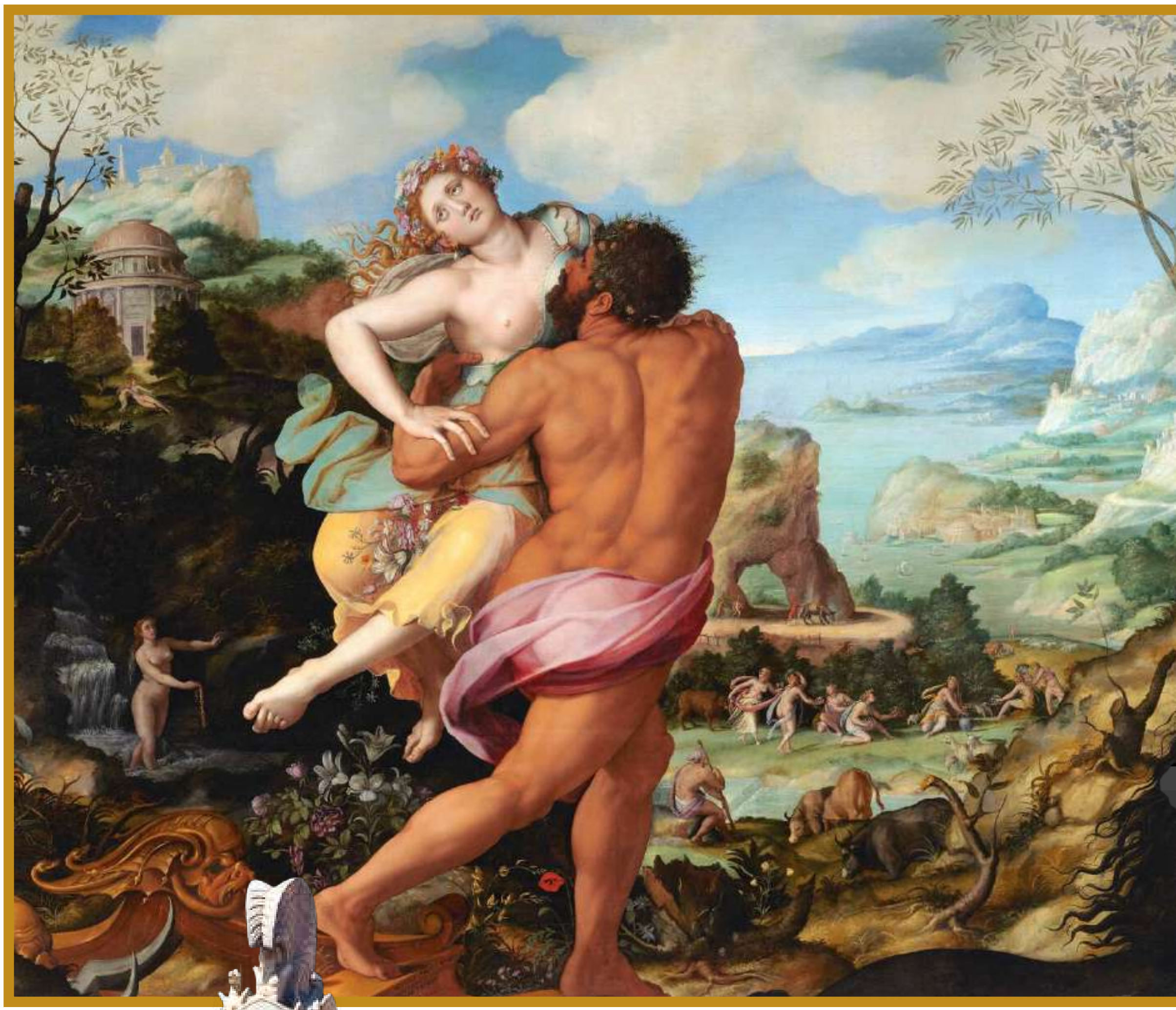
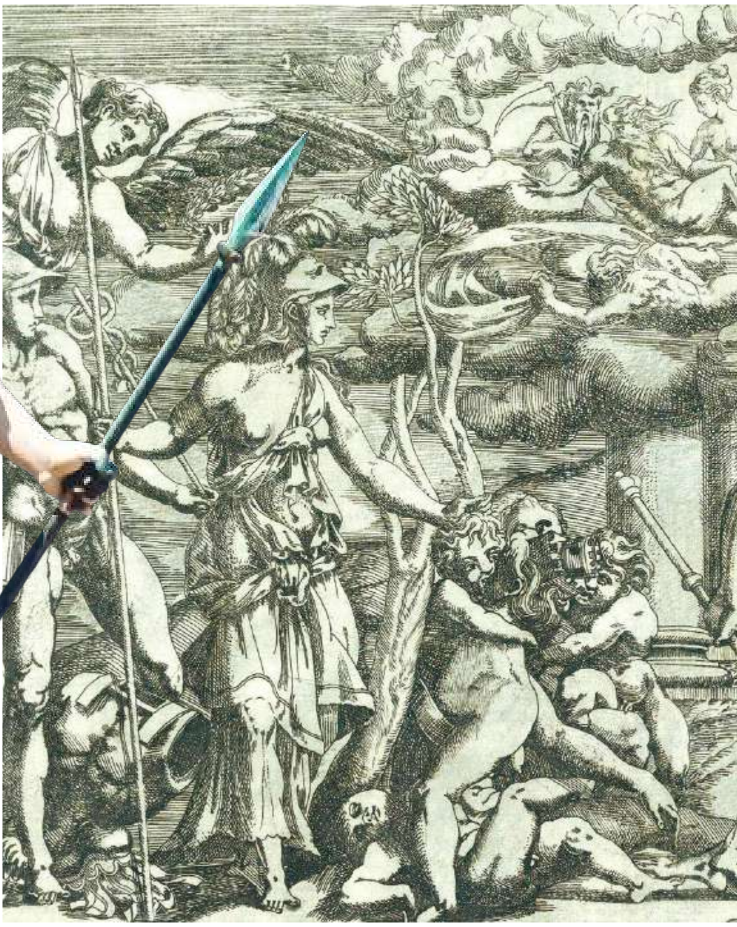
but as early as the Classical Period (5th century BCE) it was believed that her name could be a combination of the Greek words for 'earth' (gē) and 'mother' (mētēr). As guarantor of the Greeks' staple foods, she was an enormously important deity who was worshipped throughout Greece. Her portraits typically show her holding a sheaf of grain or a torch. While the sheaf of grain is clearly linked with her role as goddess of agriculture, the torch was related to her most important myth, the search for Persephone. The daughter of Demeter and Zeus, Persephone was abducted by Hades, god of the Underworld, to be his queen. While Demeter, deep in sorrow, wandered the Earth looking for her daughter, crops ceased to grow. As a result, humans went hungry and were unable to make sacrifices to the gods. When Zeus intervened and requested Persephone's return, it was discovered that Persephone had eaten the seeds of a pomegranate while in the Underworld. This bound her to spend part of the year with Hades in the realm of the dead and part with her mother among the Olympian gods. The annual separation of Demeter from her daughter explains why, during the winter months, the fields are barren, with vegetation coming to life again in spring only with Persephone's return.



APHRODITE

Reflecting her birth from the frothing sea, Aphrodite's name means 'Gift from the Foam'. Aphrodite was the goddess of beauty, sexual love and desire, who ensured the fertility of humans as well as their flocks and fields. As goddess of gardens, Aphrodite also caused garden plants to grow and flowers to blossom. Roses, which are intensely fragrant, sensuous flowers were especially sacred to her. It is this flower that was said to have bloomed on the sands where a newly born Aphrodite first stepped ashore. By some accounts she first stepped ashore on the island of Cythera, and by others at Paphos, modern Kouklia, on the island of Cyprus. For this reason she was called both the 'Cytherean' and 'Paphian' goddess.

Even in antiquity it was suspected that Aphrodite was not a native Greek goddess.

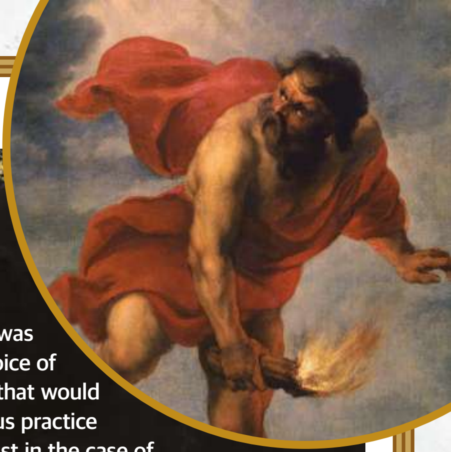


TOP-LEFT The abduction of Persephone is one of the most famous and important Greek myths

TOP-RIGHT Hades with Cerberus, the three-headed dog that guards his gate

RIGHT Athena is nearly always seen in armour despite being a goddess of peace

FAR-RIGHT Athena and Poseidon battled for supremacy in Athens, with the goddess winning



SCRAPS FOR THE GODS

How Prometheus ties into Greek ceremonial traditions

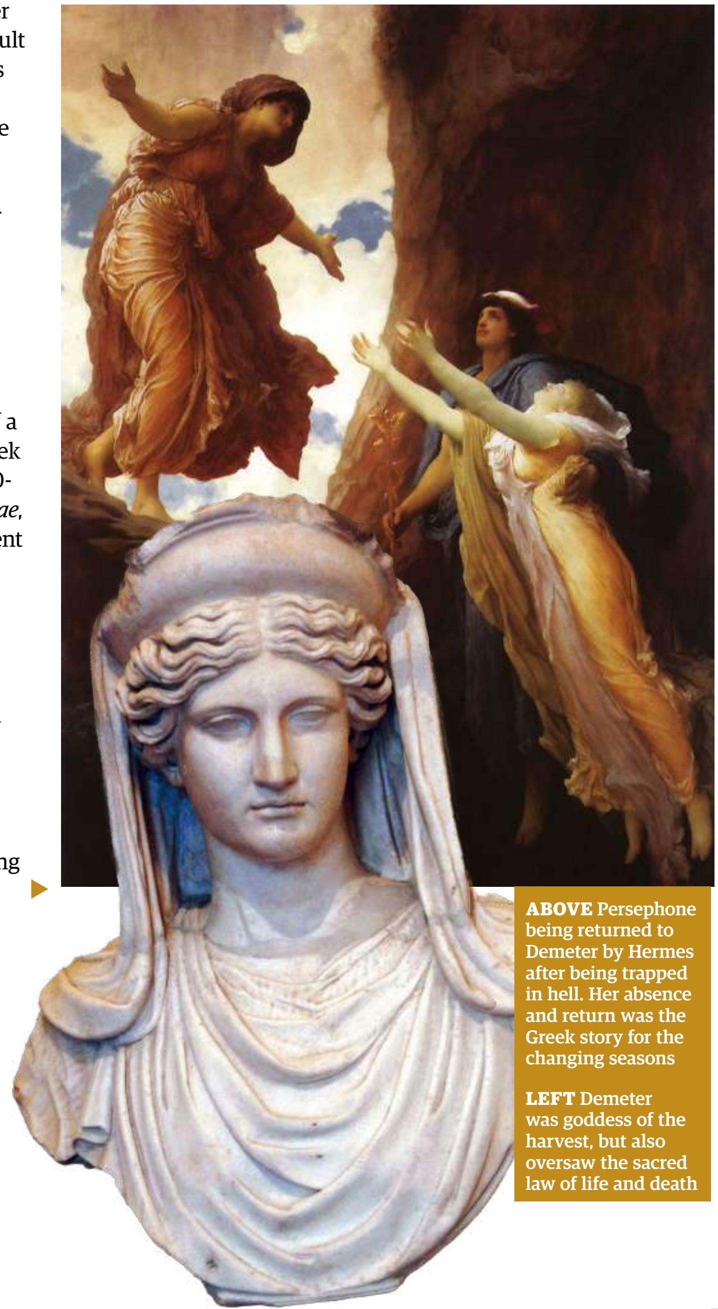
It may seem curious that the Greeks kept the best parts of sacrificial animals for themselves to enjoy on the occasion of a sacrifice and offered the gods what was essentially waste. A myth recounted by the poet Hesiod explains this. There was a time when gods and humans feasted together on a more or less equal footing, with no clear distinction between their privileges. When it came time to draw a distinction, the Titan Prometheus, who would gain a reputation for helping humans at the gods' expense, divided the carcass of a sacrificial ox into two different kinds of portions. He wrapped the precious portions of meat in bits of the ox's unappetising stomach and wrapped the animal's undesirable bones in a juicy, delicious-smelling, layer of fat. Zeus was given the first choice of portion, a choice that would determine religious practice for eternity, at least in the case of the Olympian gods. He was tempted by the juicy bones, and made a decision he instantly regretted. To punish humans, Zeus withheld fire from them. But again Prometheus outwitted him and snuck fire back to humans in a hollow fennel stick. For this Zeus punished Prometheus by binding him in chains and having an eagle eat at his liver every day only to have it regrow every night. Eventually, Heracles set Prometheus free as he traversed the Earth ridding it of monsters that plagued humanity.

There is still much uncertainty about her origins, but archaeological evidence of cult activity on the island of Cyprus suggests that this island played a critical role in her actual genesis during the Bronze Age (roughly 2500-1050 BCE). This Greek goddess most likely evolved from the Middle Eastern fertility goddesses Ishtar and Astarte, both descended from the Mesopotamian Inanna.

DIONYSUS

Dionysus is best known as the god of wine and revelry, but this is only part of a much more complex picture. As the Greek tragedian Euripides (who lived circa 480-406 BCE) explains in his play the *Bacchae*, Dionysus came to Greece from the ancient Middle East. In origin he was a deity of liquid life, specifically in vegetation. Similar to Aphrodite, he caused plants to thrive, but his specific power resided in the liquid - sap - that caused plants to grow. Over time his powers grew, and he was linked with more life-sustaining liquids from plant and animal sources, including milk, honey, blood and wine, which, heavily watered down, was the Greeks' beverage of choice. Also according to Euripides, the Greeks viewed wine as ▶

> "DIONYSUS IS BEST KNOWN AS THE GOD OF WINE AND REVELRY, BUT THIS IS ONLY PART OF A MUCH MORE COMPLEX PICTURE"



ABOVE Persephone being returned to Demeter by Hermes after being trapped in hell. Her absence and return was the Greek story for the changing seasons

LEFT Demeter was goddess of the harvest, but also oversaw the sacred law of life and death

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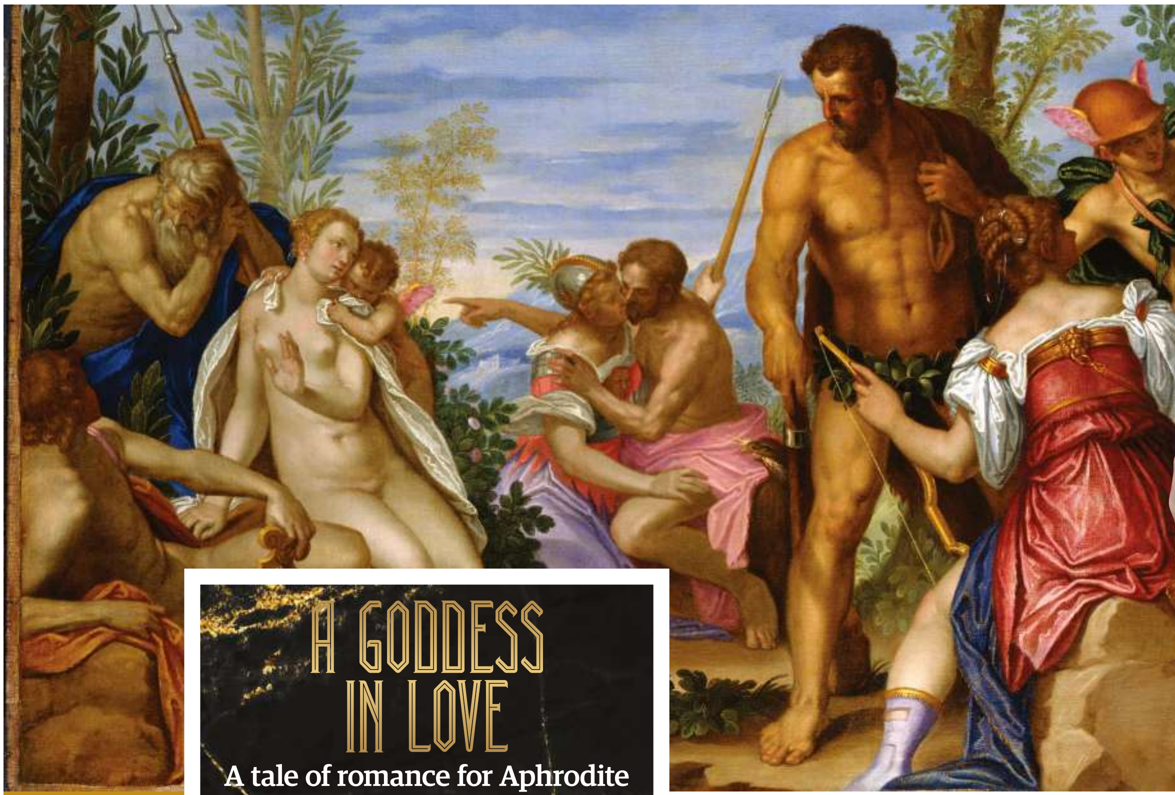
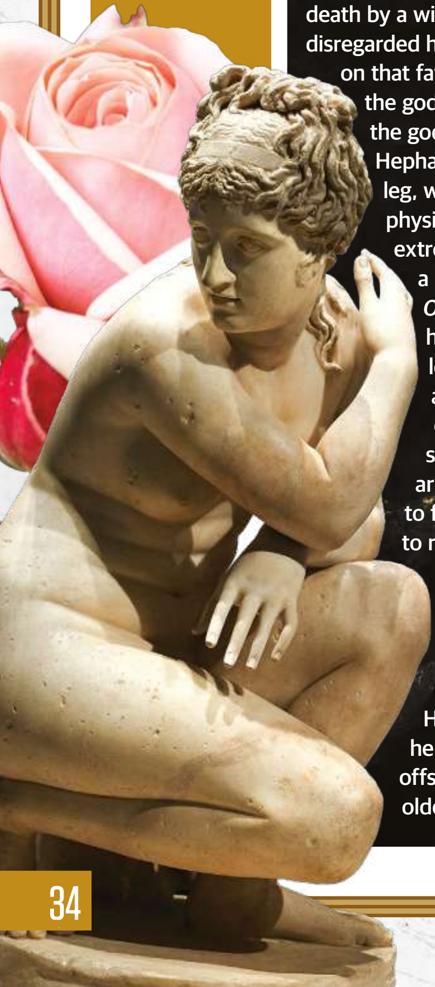


ABOVE A depiction of the gods of Olympus gathered together

BELOW Aphrodite was known as Venus by the Romans and is frequently paired with nautical imagery as she was said to have emerged from the sea



Dionysus' most precious gift, since its relaxing effects allowed people to forget their everyday worries. An additional bonus, especially to those marginalised in society, was that everyone was equal in this god's eyes: male and female, slave and free, even animal and human.

SANCTUARIES AND SACRIFICE

While the Olympian gods were worshipped throughout Greece, each of them had sanctuaries in cities or regions with which they had close ties. These sanctuaries were sacred spaces separated from the secular world by a wall or boundary markers, and at a minimum they contained a temple and an outdoor altar. The temples were conceived of as the gods' houses, not places of worship. Acts of worship could take many forms, including festivals that honoured the god and sacrifices consisting of burnt offerings made on the altar. Most often it was sheep, goats, pigs and cattle that were sacrificed, but offerings could be as humble as barley cakes and fish or as grand as dogs and sheep. The roasted meat was then divided among the devoted population, often in a communal meal. Pouring drink offerings (libations) of milk, water, honey or olive oil onto an altar or the earth (for gods of the Underworld) were also an important part of Greek ritual practice.

Olympia, which took its name from Moun Olympus, is in southern Greece and was Zeus' sacred ground, though he shared it with other lesser gods as well. The travel writer Pausanias recorded that there were in fact over 70 shrines and temples here dedicated to a range of heroes and gods. However, the glory of Olympia was the great temple of Zeus, which contained an enormous ivory and gold cult statue of Zeus seated on his throne. Pausanias remarked that this statue (about 12m in height) was so large that if the sculpted god had stood up from his throne, he would have broken through the temple's roof. Considered in antiquity to be one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, it had been destroyed by the 5th century CE.

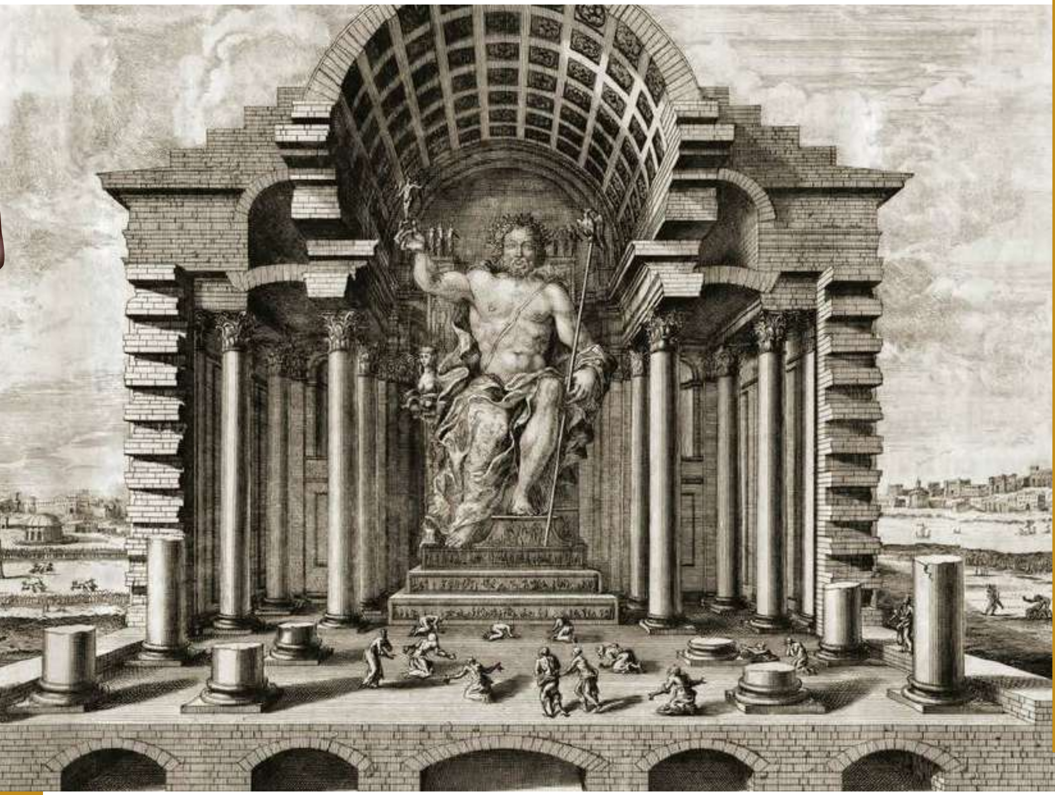
Eleusis, which lies on the Saronic Gulf about 20km northwest of Athens, was the site most sacred to Demeter. Visitors from across the Mediterranean would come to Eleusis in order to participate in sacred rites known as the Eleusinian Mysteries, which offered celebrants both a fruitful harvest and a blessed afterlife. As participants were required to keep the proceedings secret, not a great deal is known about these mysteries. It is known, however, that preparation for the festivities involved carrying unknown sacred objects in procession and purifying oneself and a sacrificial piglet in the sea nearby.

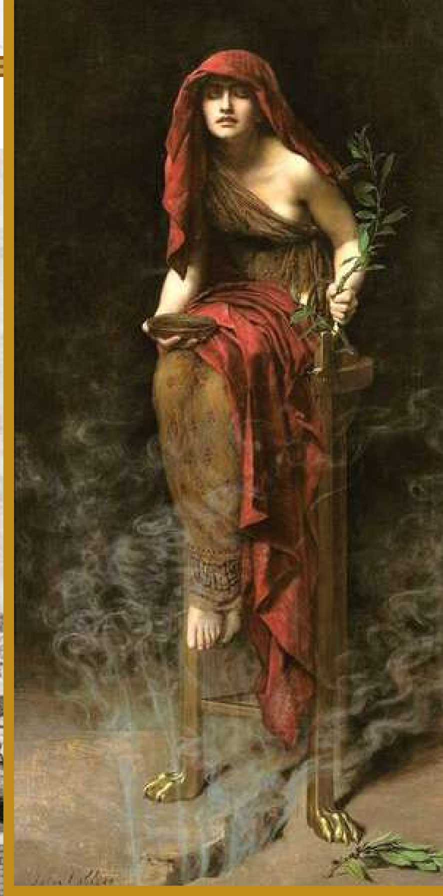
> "PAUSANIAS REMARKED THAT IF THE SCULPTED GOD HAD STOOD UP, HE WOULD HAVE BROKEN THROUGH THE TEMPLE'S ROOF"

A GODDESS IN LOVE

A tale of romance for Aphrodite

In myth Aphrodite, this goddess who brought love to others, was not herself immune to love. She seduced the Trojan hero Anchises and the result of their passion was Aeneas, whom the Romans, including Julius Caesar and the emperor Augustus, claimed as their ancestor. Another of Aphrodite's loves was the handsome young Adonis, to whom she was devoted until he was gored to death by a wild boar. Foolishly, he had disregarded her warning not to go hunting on that fateful day. While married to the god Hephaistos, she took Ares, the god of war, as a lover. Although Hephaistos, with his misshapen leg, was the only god with a physical challenge, he was an extremely skilled craftsman. In a story told by Homer in the *Odyssey*, Hephaistos trapped his cheating wife and her lover in a net as they tossed amorously in bed. Aphrodite's only child, Eros, was her son with Ares. Eros, whose arrows could cause people to fall in love or, alternatively, to run from their lover, is best known by his Latin name Cupid. Eros, the son of Aphrodite, is different from the primordial force called 'Eros' that appears in Hesiod's creation myth, but he may well have evolved as an offshoot or re-imagination of the older elemental deity.





ABOVE-LEFT As the god of festivity, it's no wonder that Dionysus is a god well known for celebration and drinking

ABOVE-MIDDLE A sketch of what Zeus' temple in Olympia, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, would have looked like

ABOVE-RIGHT The oracle of Delphi was a hugely important figure who was thought to be able to communicate with Apollo

BELOW The Altis of Olympia was the sacred grove dedicated to Zeus where offerings would be made

The Acropolis of Athens, meanwhile, was the location of Athena's premier temple, the Parthenon. The Acropolis served as her primary sanctuary, though it was shared with other gods and contained other temples. The city of Athens held an annual festival called the Panathenaia ('all-Athenian') in the goddess' honour. This festival was held on Athena's birthday in the month of Hekatombaion (July/August), which was named after the hecatomb – the sacrifice of 100 cattle that took place at this event.

Delphi, Apollo's most important sanctuary, is located in central Greece on the steep, rugged slopes of Mount Parnassus. The presence from the 8th century BCE onwards of abundant offerings, primarily ceramic and bronze, indicates that cult activities were well-established here by this time. Delphi was and still is best known as the site of the Delphic Oracle. The actual oracle was the priestess of Apollo called the Pythia. The Pythia sat in the innermost, most sacred part of Apollo's temple. People from all over Greece and beyond came to Delphi wishing for answers to all manner of questions. Before consulting the oracle via her interpreters, pilgrims needed to make appropriate sacrifices to the gods. After purifying herself with sacred waters and performing a burnt sacrifice of barley and laurel leaves, the Pythia seated herself on a tripod and could go into a trance. Geologic investigations by JZ de Boer and his team at the turn of the 21st century revealed the presence of intoxicating ethylene vapours rising from a fault in the bedrock below the Temple of Apollo, substantiating statements made in antiquity by the 1st century CE author Plutarch and others that the Pythia's trance was induced by hallucinogenic vapours.

LEGACY OF THE GODS

While processions may no longer wind their way through Athens, the gods of Greece have endured in myriad ways. They have continued to exist, and to evolve, in literature, art, film, music and novel forms of popular culture through the ages. Meanwhile, it is still possible to visit many of the houses of the gods and their sanctuaries, whether in person or virtually. Among the best-preserved in Greece may be the Parthenon, Olympia and Delphi, but there is so much more to see. No trip to Greece would be complete without an excursion to the remains of Poseidon's temple at Sounion, for example, which is on a promontory overlooking the sea 40km southeast of Athens. It is an awe-inspiring place from which to experience the rising or setting sun, and to imagine Greece during the time of the ancient gods. ○

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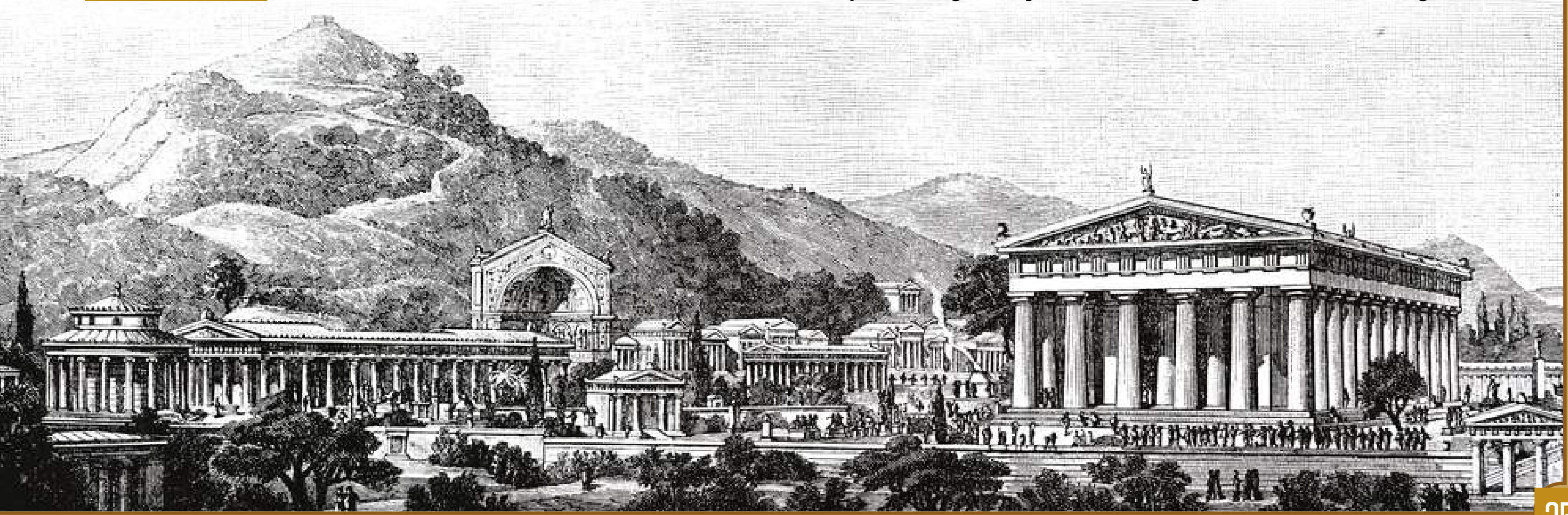


THE MILITANT LIFE OF EMMELINE PANKHURST

How one campaigner's violent approach to protest transformed women's fight for the vote

Written by Poppy-Jay St Palmer

As Britain entered the 20th century, the list of things British women weren't allowed to do was depressingly long: among other things, they couldn't serve on juries, they couldn't open bank accounts or apply for loans, they couldn't take on certain professional roles like lawyer or accountant, and they weren't allowed to vote. At the time, most single women had little to no social standing and married women had to surrender all of their property and earnings to their husbands upon saying, 'I do'. Many people believed women had smaller brains than men and were therefore unprepared for the world of work and politics.

Countless activists campaigned to bring about change for the country's female citizens, with varying degrees of success. One particular fight that frequently hit the headlines was that in favour of women's suffrage – the right to vote in political elections – and a mixture of persistent parliament pressure and unusual demonstration techniques helped to bring about the victory. A key player in the campaign was Emmeline Pankhurst: activist, feminist and the original suffragette. Fuelled by an unmatchable passion for voting equality, she dedicated much of her life to the cause and, almost a century after her death, is still remembered as one of Britain's most influential women's rights advocates.

THE ICON IS BORN

Pankhurst's story began in Manchester in 1858. Born Emmeline Goulden, she was one of ten children and the eldest of five Goulden daughters. Her mother, Sophia, was from the Isle of Man, the first legislative body in the world to grant women the right to vote. Her father, Robert, came from a humble Mancunian family with a background in political activity, and was a self-made man who had worked his way up from errand boy to manufacturer. Both frequently involved themselves with activism, and the apple didn't fall too far from the tree as far as Emmeline was concerned.

In her 1914 biography *My Own Story*, Pankhurst recalls one of her earliest memories in which she accompanied

THE IMMORTAL CROWN
OF THE ELECT
OUR HEROES
MARSHAL

ABOVE-LEFT
Pankhurst leads women through Victoria Embankment, London, as they attempt to gain recognition from the government

ABOVE-RIGHT
In her element, Pankhurst addresses a crowd of 5,000 on historic Boston Common

OPPOSITE
Pankhurst's protest methods were designed to get people talking. She and her fellow suffragettes were often arrested for their militant efforts

her mother at a bazaar in Manchester where they collected donations for newly freed slaves in the USA. "My mother took an active part in this effort," she writes, "and I, as a small child, was entrusted with a lucky bag by means of which I helped to collect the money. Young as I was – I could not have been older than five years – I knew perfectly well the meaning of the words slavery and emancipation. From infancy I had been accustomed to hear pro and con discussions of slavery and the American Civil War."

SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT

Despite her parents' progressive politics, their views were very much a product of the time when it came to raising their children. They made great plans for their sons' educations, but believed that their daughters would be better off learning more domestic skills that would make them more desirable to their future husbands. They hoped little Emmeline and her sisters would marry young and avoid having to find paid work to make their way.

Although the Gouldens didn't pin their hopes on their daughters amounting to much professionally, they both still very much supported women's suffrage. Sophia even held a subscription to the *Women's Suffrage Journal* – which would often find itself recycled into the hands of a smaller Goulden – and it was through her mother that Pankhurst's feminist spark was ignited, as remembered through a passage in her memoir. When she was 14 years old, Pankhurst returned home from school to find her mother on her way to a public meeting about women's voting rights. Upon discovering that Lydia Becker, the editor of the *Women's Suffrage Journal*, would be a guest speaker, Pankhurst begged to hear Becker's address. In her own words, Pankhurst left the meeting a conscious and confirmed suffragist.

Growing up, Pankhurst continued to show an interest in women's rights. Rejecting her parents' plans for her future, she attended a school in Paris that offered female students classes in more typically masculine subjects like chemistry and bookkeeping. After graduating, Pankhurst moved back to Manchester, where her passion for women's rights and suffrage continued.

THE NEW PANKHURSTS

One thing she wasn't expecting to gain from her political activism was romance. In 1878, she met Dr Richard Pankhurst and fell madly in love. Dr Pankhurst was a 44-year-old lawyer who supported a number of radical causes such as freedom of speech, education reform and, of course, women's suffrage. Though Emmeline, now 20, hadn't set out to meet a partner and Dr Pankhurst had previously resolved to remain a bachelor to better serve the public, the pair were clearly a match made in heaven. They married on 18 December 1879, and started their life together in London. The new Pankhurst family quickly grew, welcoming daughters Christabel, Sylvia and Adela and sons Frank – who sadly died during childhood – and Henry. Despite her new household and motherly duties, Pankhurst vowed to remain politically active: she hired a butler to help care for the children while she campaigned for her husband during his (unsuccessful) runs for Parliament and hosted political gatherings at their family home in Russell Square.

> "It was through her mother that Pankhurst's feminist spark was ignited"

After ten years of child-rearing and political dabbling, Pankhurst teamed up with her husband to form the Women's Franchise League in 1889. A handful of women's suffrage groups had started to crop up all over the country, including the National Society for Women's Suffrage (NSWS) – led by Lydia Becker and campaigner/future feminist icon Millicent Fawcett – and the Parliament Street Society (PSS), which Pankhurst supported for a time. Although each group worked towards electoral reform, many had different approaches. The PSS, for example, thought it prudent to secure the vote for single and widowed women, as married women didn't need to vote since their husbands did it for them. This view didn't sit right with the Pankhursts, so they broke ties with the group and created the Women's Franchise League (WFL), which advocated for all women regardless of their marital status.

The difference in values created friction between certain suffrage groups. Alongside voting equality, the WFL also advocated for trade unionism and attempted to team up with socialist organisations. The more conservative group that broke off from the NSWS branded the WFL as a radicalised, extreme left-wing organisation. The WFL hit back, referring to the NSWS as the "Spinster Suffrage Party". But despite their best efforts the WFL didn't have quite the effect the Pankhursts were hoping for and it quickly fell apart, with members resigning left, right and centre.

A NEW ERA

Despite these setbacks, Pankhurst continued to make her mark. When her husband's London business flopped the family returned to Manchester and Pankhurst fell back into politics, wanting to distinguish herself as an activist in her own right. But just as she was gaining steam, tragedy struck. Her husband's health deteriorated and he died on 5 July 1898. Pankhurst first heard of his death in a newspaper on a train back from Switzerland.

As well as suddenly finding herself a widowed mother of four, Pankhurst was also left with a substantial amount of debt. For the first time ever, she entered the workforce. But, like most happenstances throughout her life, her new role only inspired her further. Working an office job and then, later, on the Manchester School Board led to her meeting other employed women and hearing firsthand accounts of their working conditions and the shocking differences compared to those of working men. This new insight reignited her passion for activism – she was convinced that women needed the vote before their conditions could be improved. "These poor, unprotected mothers and their babies

▶

MRS PANKHURST'S AMAZONS

Prominent suffragettes that made waves while fighting for the vote alongside Emmeline Pankhurst

CHRISTABEL PANKHURST (1880 – 1958)

- Co-founded the Women's Social and Political Union with her mother Emmeline Pankhurst
- Directed some of the group's most aggressive activities while in exile in France from 1912-13
- Edited the WSPU's newspaper, *The Suffragette*

CONSTANCE LYTTON (1869 – 1923)

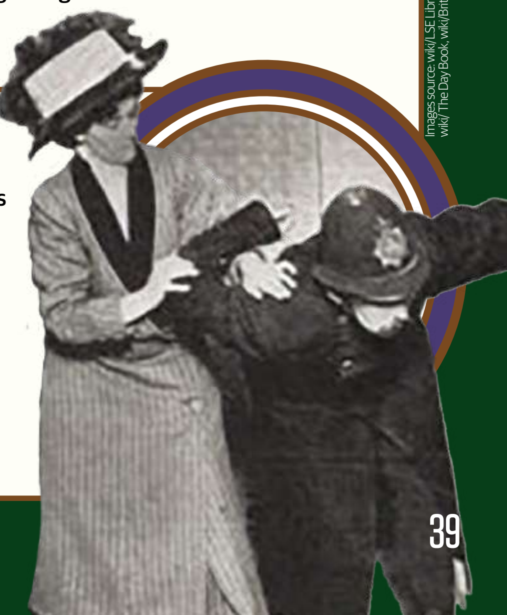
- Campaigned for prison reform and birth control alongside votes for women
- Refused to use her privilege as the daughter of Robert Bulwer-Lytton, using the name Jane Warton to avoid special treatment while imprisoned
- Used a broken piece of enamel to carve a 'V' for 'Votes for Women' into the flesh over her heart while in her prison cell

EMILY DAVISON (1872 – 1913)

- Worked as a teacher before quitting to serve the suffrage movement full-time
- Arrested nine times, went on hunger strike seven times and force-fed by authorities on 49 occasions while imprisoned
- Gave her life to the suffrage movement when she walked onto the track during the 1913 Epsom Derby and was trampled by King George V's horse

EDITH GARRUD (1872 – 1971)

- Known as the 'Jiu-jitsu Suffragette'
- Remembered for training the Women's Social and Political Union's bodyguard unit in jiu-jitsu self-defence to protect their leaders from arrest and violence from the public
- Lessons took place in ever-changing secret locations to avoid the attention of the police



Images source: wiki/LSE Library, wiki/ Joanna Kośmider, wiki/ The Day Book, wiki/British Press

I am sure were potent factors in my education as a militant," she declared in *My Own Story*.

THE BIRTH OF THE SUFFRAGETTES

Women's suffrage groups began to gain momentum as they entered the 20th century, but opposing forces refused to back down. The National Society for Women's Suffrage, also known as the Suffragists, had continued their efforts but without much success. Their modus operandi was peaceful protest, believing they could bring about change through petitioning Parliament for electoral reform – but 16,000 petitions later, nothing was changing. As far as Pankhurst was concerned, peaceful protests weren't enough. Later addressing a crowd in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1913, she said: "You have to make more noise than anybody else, you have to make yourself more obtrusive than anybody else, you have to fill all the papers more than anybody else; in fact you have to be there all the time and see that they do not show you under, if you are really going to get your reform realised."

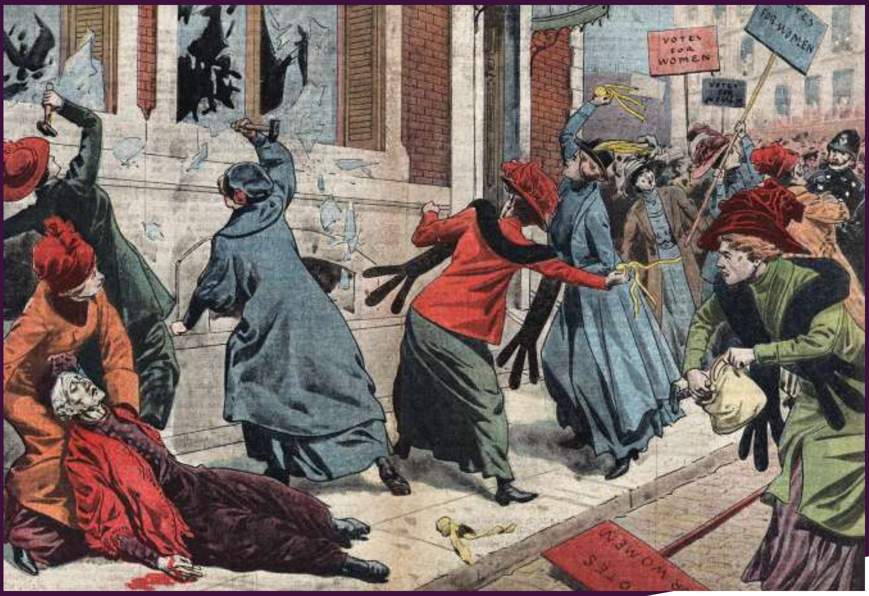
In October 1903, Pankhurst and her daughters formed the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), a new militant division of the suffrage movement. Unlike its predecessors, it was open only to women and focused on direct action and civil disobedience. In her 1914 memoir, Pankhurst wrote: "Deeds, not words, was to be our permanent motto."

> "While locked up, Pankhurst and the suffragettes endured horrifying conditions"

Before the WSPU, many women's suffrage groups relied heavily on the clout of their male members. The combination of the WSPU's mission with the fact that its membership was composed purely of women meant it was often laughed out of the room before it got started. A *Daily Mail* reporter attempted to ridicule the group in a 1906 issue of the newspaper, calling the WSPU's throng of female suffragists "suffragettes". But the slight backfired: the group embraced the new name and even titled their self-published newspaper after it. The suffragettes were born.

NEW TACTICS

With the new name came new demonstration methods as the suffragettes gathered momentum. When the WSPU was first formed, they held rallies, published agenda-pushing newspapers and protested outside Parliament buildings. But the suffragettes quickly became known for their physical approach to protest, doing everything from setting fire to post boxes to assaulting police officers. The aim was to draw attention to the issue by forcing arrests, and their efforts often paid off. In 1905, the eldest Pankhurst daughter, Christabel, was arrested after spitting at a policeman during a Liberal Party meeting. Her sisters Adela and Sylvia followed not long after during a protest outside Parliament. Emmeline Pankhurst was finally arrested herself in 1908 when she attempted to enter Parliament to deliver a protest resolution to Liberal Party leader and then-Prime Minister HH Asquith. Causing chaos became the Pankhursts' natural state, and they were repeatedly imprisoned alongside a number of other courageous suffragettes.

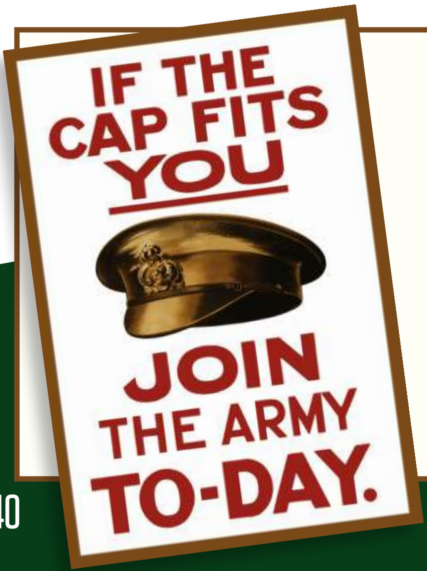


ABOVE The suffragette's violent tactics inspired many women, but many others were against such methods

While locked up, Pankhurst and the suffragettes endured horrifying conditions. Their cells were riddled with vermin, nourishment was meagre and the activists were often forced to endure torturous solitary confinement. Seeing an opportunity, Pankhurst used her time in prison to publicise the urgency of women's suffrage. She and other suffragettes often went on hunger strikes until the authorities were pushed to force-feed the women through tubes inserted into their noses and mouths.

The suffragettes' militant tactics caused much division when it came to public opinion, often spearheaded by the media. Several newspapers referred to the new approach as 'Suffragette Terrorism'. Some women grew impassioned by the suffragettes, while others were disapproving. Eventually, the violent approach became too much for some of the WSPU and several prominent members left to join other suffrage groups, including Pankhurst's youngest daughters Adela and Sylvia. Pankhurst was furious, but continued the fight with her eldest, Christabel.

Following the decline of the WSPU, something had to change. In 1917, Emmeline and Christabel hit the drawing board again and transformed the group's machinery into the Women's Party, a new



A BIGGER WAR

How Pankhurst paused the protests but continued the fight for WWI

The fight for electoral reform was interrupted by a bigger battle in 1914. News of the Great War brought the world to a standstill, and caused Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst to halt their militant activism in support of the British Government's stand against the Central Powers.

True to form, Emmeline Pankhurst quickly organised and led a huge procession known as the Women's Right to Serve demonstration, which highlighted women's contribution to the war effort. As militarists, she and Christabel began urging other women to get involved in industrial production and shamed young men into enlisting.

In contrast to their previous public reputation, the pair became darlings of the conservative press. They soon found themselves key figures in the 'white feather movement', the activities of which involved handing out white feathers (symbolising cowardice) to men not in uniform. Pankhurst's actions during this time have long since puzzled feminists that came after her.

minor political party led by Christabel. The previously fiery campaign for women's votes was put on hold during the First World War to focus on the war effort, which the Pankhursts deemed to be more important. "We declared an armistice with the Government and suspended militancy for the duration of the war," explained Christabel in her 1959 book *Unshackled: The Story of How We Won the Vote*. "We offered our service to the country and called upon all members to do likewise... As Mother said, 'What would be the good of a vote without a country to vote in!'." The Women's Party still advocated for a number of feminist policies like equal pay, equal marriage and divorce laws, and equal parental rights. However, following an unsuccessful campaign in its first year, the Women's Party closed up shop for good.

THE END RESULT

Towards the end of the Great War, the suffragist movement celebrated a victory. In February 1918, Parliament began to cave to decades of pressure and the Representation of the People Act was passed. The new legislation gave the vote to property-owning men over 21 and property-owning women over 30. Though women still weren't politically equal to men, it was a step in the right direction. Pankhurst put her nose back to the grindstone, continuing to promote women's empowerment and becoming involved in political campaigning.

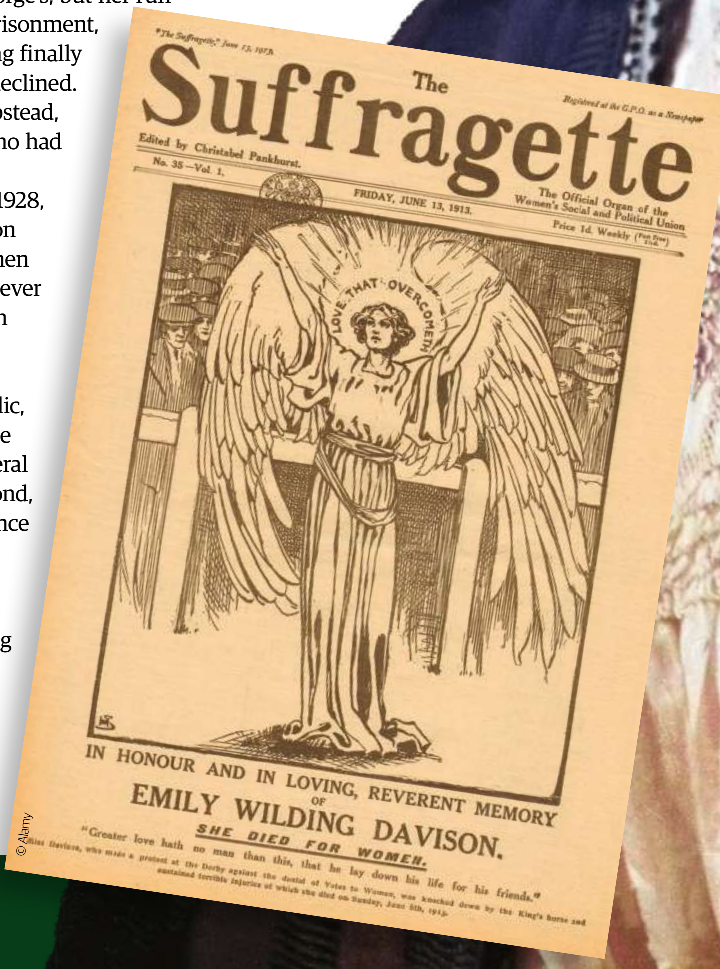
In a move that surprised many, Pankhurst joined the Conservative Party in 1926. Her views had changed somewhat since the war. "By now she was in an ideological vacuum," explains feminist historian Paula Bartley. "She had left Liberalism far behind... In her view, socialists were now a discredited force, discredited by pacifism and pro-Germanism." Pankhurst was no longer the window-smashing, police-bashing militant of the past, but she was still very much dedicated to women's rights. Two years after joining, she ran as a candidate for Parliament in Whitechapel and St George's, but her run came to an abrupt end. Her years of imprisonment, hunger strikes and relentless campaigning finally caught up to her and her health rapidly declined. She moved into a nursing home in Hampstead, where she was cared for by the doctor who had assisted her during her hunger strikes.

Emmeline Pankhurst died on 14 June 1928, just five months before the Representation of the People Act was amended and women gained full voting equality to men. She never got to witness the first 21-year-old women making their way to the polling stations.

Though her violent methods were viewed with disdain by much of the public, Pankhurst's impact on equal rights for the women of Britain is undeniable. Her funeral gained coverage all over Britain and beyond, and many former suffragettes in attendance donned WSPU sashes and ribbons. One even set up a fund for a memorial statue, which finally reached its target in the spring of 1930. A larger-than-life rendering of Emmeline Pankhurst was erected in Victoria Tower Gardens. The statue showed her gesturing towards the Houses of Parliament, the place she was arrested all those years ago, and it still stands there today.

RIGHT Through her work with the WSPU, Pankhurst became a key figure in the bitter struggle for women's suffrage

BELOW This edition of *The Suffragette* was dedicated to Emily Davison, who was killed by the king's horse at the Epsom Derby



"The Suffragette," June 13, 1913.

The Suffragette

Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper

Edited by Christabel Pankhurst.

No. 35—Vol. 1.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 1913.

The Official Organ of the Women's Social and Political Union

Price 1d. Weekly (Post Free 1½d.)

LOVE THAT OVERCOMETH

IN HONOUR AND IN LOVING, REVERENT MEMORY OF

EMILY WILDING DAVISON.

SHE DIED FOR WOMEN.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

Miss Davison, who made a protest at the Derby against the denial of Votes to Women, was knocked down by the King's horse and sustained terrible injuries of which she died on Sunday, June 8th, 1913.

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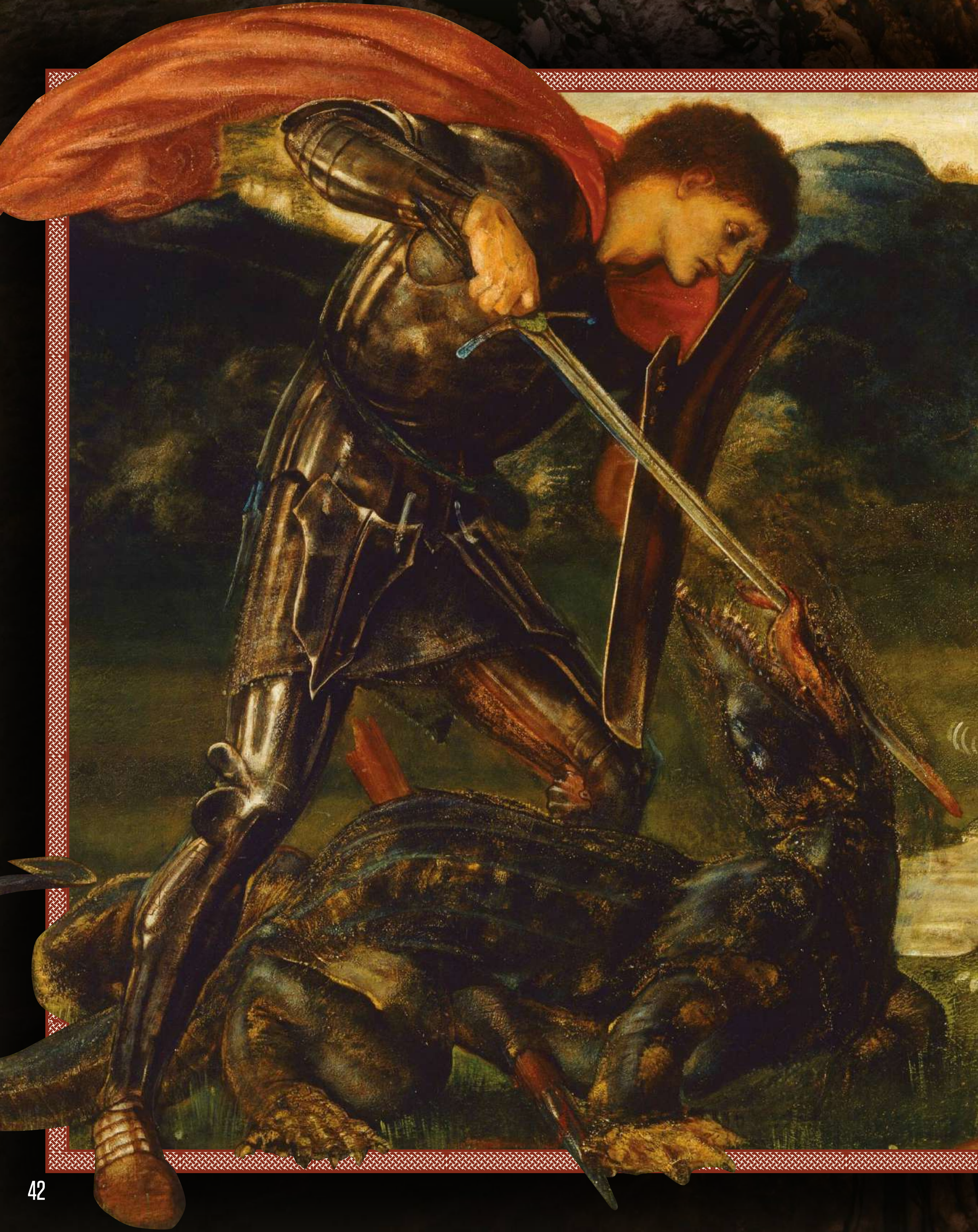


Here There Be Dragons

Chantry Westwell explains the medieval obsession with dragons and why the mythical beasts were feared by all

Interview by Jonathan Gordon

Dragons have been a cornerstone of storytelling for centuries. Today, they are an essential piece of classic fantasy literature, playing the role of villain or misunderstood hero depending on the author's preferred take. What's more, dragons appear to have a wide global appeal, with a rich culture around them emerging in the Far East and in Europe. However, for medieval Europeans, the dragon was not a fantasy. These terrifying beasts represented something very real, as we learn speaking with Chantry Westwell, author of *Dragons, Heroes, Myths & Magic*.

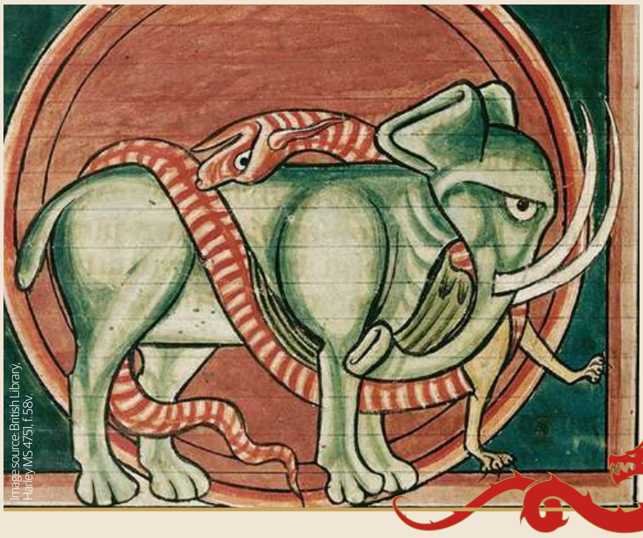
EXPERT BIO

CHANTRY WESTWELL

Chantry Westwell has spent the last 12 years working for the British Library on its illuminated manuscripts collections, which inspired her new book *Dragons, Heroes, Myths & Magic*. She also holds qualifications in medieval studies and historical linguistics.

Did people in the Middle Ages really believe that dragons were real, or had at least once existed?

Based on written sources, it seems people did believe that dragons were members of the animal kingdom. Medieval encyclopedists and natural scientists, basing their descriptions on classical writers such as Pliny, Solinus and Aristotle, included the dragon ('draco' in Latin, 'drakon' in Greek) in their taxonomies of the natural world. The 7th century encyclopedia *Etymologies* by Isidore of Seville refers to the dragon as a very large snake. The dragon, according to his description, has a crest, a small mouth and a narrow throat, and its strength was in its tail rather than its teeth.



LEFT A snake-like dragon attacks an elephant in a *Bestiary*. The dragon was thought to be the elephant's 'natural enemy'

Image source: British Library, Harley MS 4751, f. 58v.

The *Bestiary*, a moralising encyclopedia of animals popular in medieval England, described the dragon as the natural enemy of a real creature, the elephant. Though its venom was harmless, it would lie in wait and strangle the elephant with its tail. People at this time were highly unlikely to have seen an elephant, so to them both creatures would have seemed equally exotic. With the Age of Enlightenment, and the exploration of the four corners of the Earth, the dragon's existence was conclusively rejected by naturalists. The Swedish scientist Linnaeus, who included the dragon in his first taxonomy in 1735 (under the heading 'Paradoxa', alongside the unicorn, hydra and satyr) excluded it in the second edition five years later. Dragons came to be seen as purely mythical beasts, though even today some still believe in the existence of similar creatures, like the Loch Ness Monster.

Where did the people think dragons came from?

Dragons, along with other terrifying creatures, were believed to inhabit the lands beyond the edge of the known world. In some descriptions the hot areas of Ethiopia and India are identified as their habitat. Alexander the Great, whose journeys of conquest took him as far

Main image: © Getty Images
Image courtesy of Chantry Westwell

as India in the 4th century BCE, is often shown in manuscript images fighting dragons. They were among the exotic beasts and peoples he encountered in fanciful medieval tales of his exploits. In Sir John Mandeville's book describing his supposed journey as far as Cathay in the 14th century, dragons, serpents and cockodrills (crocodiles) inhabit Silha Island, which is located somewhere between the "Vale Perilous" and India. A medieval English map depicting a Christian view of the world with Jerusalem at the centre includes two dragons at the bottom – in the region where Hell was believed to be – the opposite side of the Earth to Christ and the angels.

Dragons, along with other terrifying creatures, were believed to inhabit the lands beyond the edge of the known world

What symbolic roles did dragons tend to play in stories?

Dragons have been seen as powerful and terrifying symbols of evil across human cultures for millennia, and despite their inclusion in various scientific works this was true of Europe in the Middle Ages. In medieval legend there is scarcely a knight or warrior who does not face and overcome a dragon at some stage in his swashbuckling career; dragon-slayers include Beowulf, Ywain, Guy of Warwick, Perceforest, and the classical heroes like Hercules and Perseus whose stories were retold for contemporary audiences.

Despite this, dragons did have some positive attributes, being popular symbols in medieval heraldry, especially in Great Britain. They symbolised bravery and were seen as defenders of treasure. In the Anglo-Saxon epic tale *Beowulf* the great dragon lurks beneath the Earth, jealously guarding a treasure hoard "left by the last survivor of a noble race." Thus he represents the old traditions, which are about to be swept away by a young hero.

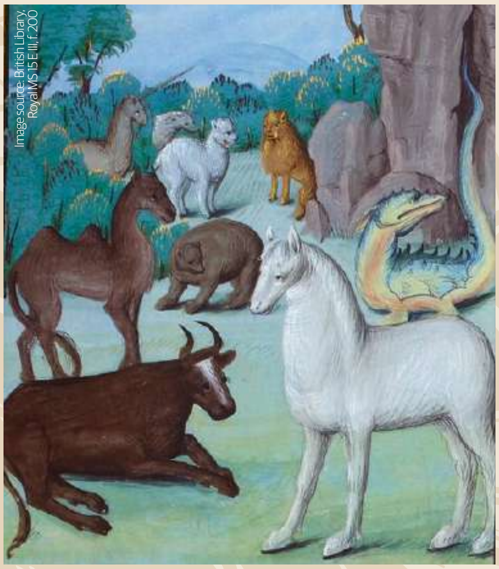


Image source: British Library, Royal MS 15 E II, f. 200

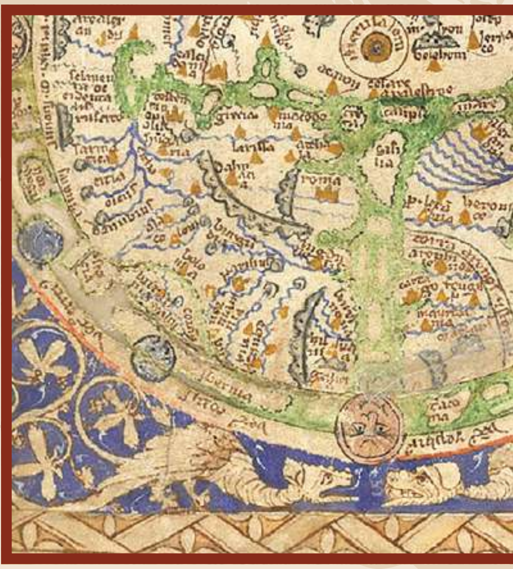
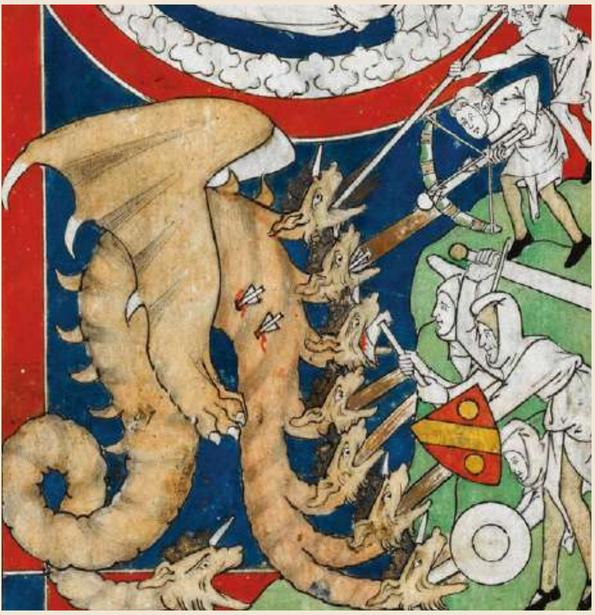


Image source: British Library, Add MS 28681, f. 9r

Could you tell us a little about the role of the dragon in the Margaret of Antioch story?

In medieval saints' lives dragons represent death and the forces of ignorance and evil, including temptations of the flesh; they are vanquished by the use of superhuman powers gained by saints by virtue of their faith in God. According to the *Golden Legend*, the most popular collection of saints lives in the Middle Ages, Margaret, a young Christian virgin in fourth century Antioch (then part of the Roman empire) was subjected to unspeakable tortures by a pagan Roman official after she rejected his advances. Thrown into prison with multiple wounds, she was kneeling in prayer when the devil in the shape of a dragon leapt out and devoured her. But by making the sign of the cross in his belly she ripped it open and was able to escape. The devil then appeared to her in other guises, but was again vanquished by Margaret and buried deep in the earth. Margaret's defeat of the dragon symbolises the defeat of sexual desire by piety and of the old pagan ways by the superior power of the new religion, Christianity.



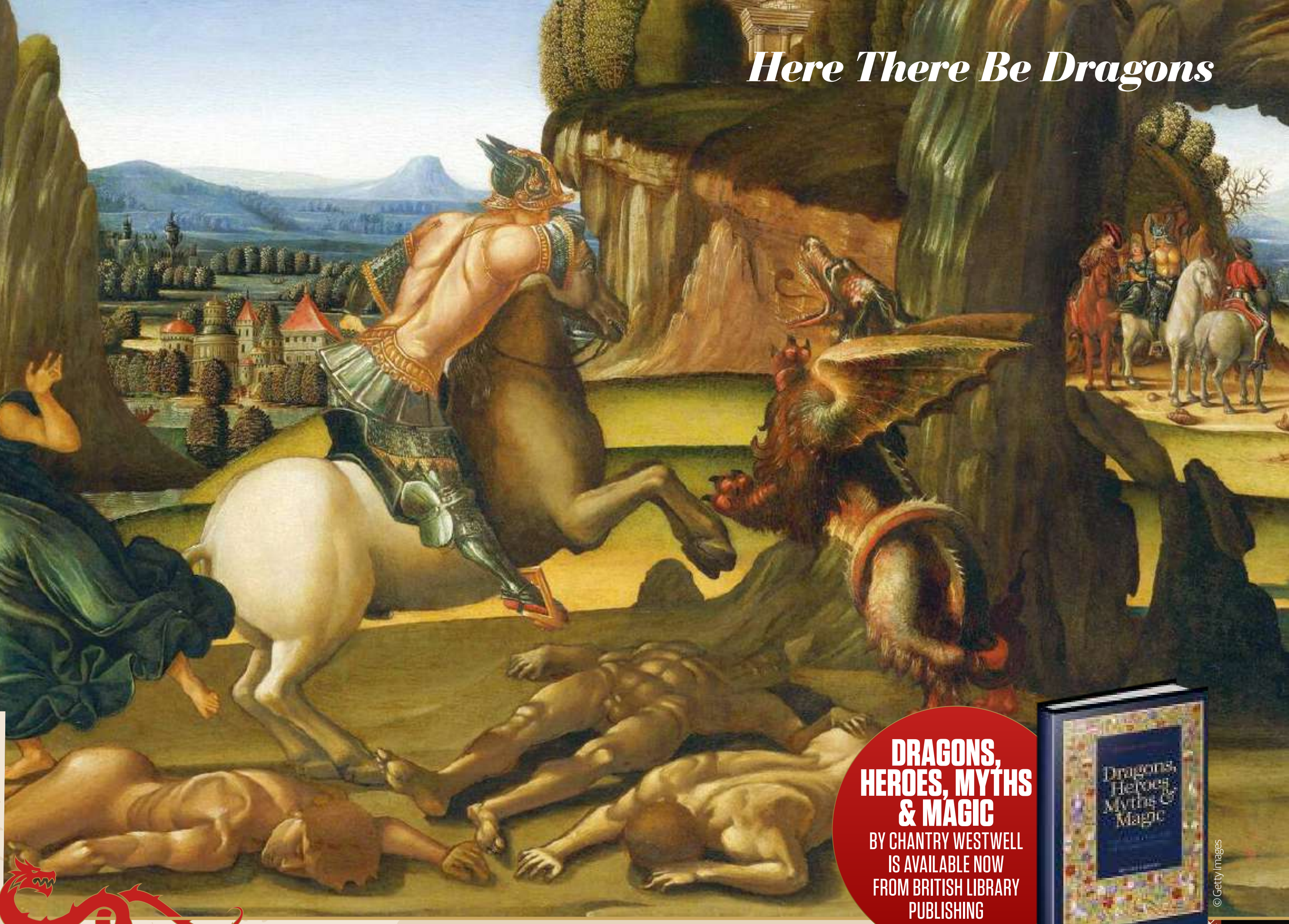
BELOW The battle between the saints and the dragon with seven heads (*Revelation 12:17*) in the *Queen Mary Apocalypse*

Image source: British Library, Royal MS 19 B XV, f. 22v

How common was it for women to be depicted defeating a dragon?

Margaret was a very popular saint in England and images of her are common in paintings on the walls of churches, in tomb sculptures and in manuscripts used for private prayer. She was usually shown emerging unscathed from the dragon's belly, holding a cross or a spear. This and the fact that she apparently said a prayer for mothers and babies before she died gave her special status as a saint associated with fertility and motherhood.

Other female saints apart from Margaret defeated dragons or similar creatures. St Theodora vanquished devils in the form of wild beasts by the power of prayer. St Perpetua had a vision of a golden ladder with a horrible dragon at its foot, which she must climb to escape from prison. St Martha, sister of Lazarus in the *Bible*, is said to have travelled to France and rescued the people of Tarascon from a tarasque, a great dragon



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DRAGONS, HEROES, MYTHS & MAGIC
BY CHANTRY WESTWELL IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM BRITISH LIBRARY PUBLISHING

TOP-LEFT A dragon sits alongside a camel, bear, steer, horse, lion, and unicorn at the beginning of Book 18 of Bartholomeus Anglicus' *De proprietatibus rerum*

TOP-RIGHT A painting of St George fighting the dragon from around 1500

ABOVE This medieval Psalter world map shows dragons at the bottom, representing Hell

that was half-beast half-fish. She tamed it by sprinkling it with holy water.

In the literary world outside of saints' legends, women were less likely to defeat dragons and more likely to be rescued from them by knights. The heroine of a French tale, Melusine the half-fairy, who is proactive and in control of her own destiny, turns into a dragon ('serpent' in French) and flies away when her husband betrays her trust. She then appears in this form from time to time to help and protect her sons.

The story of St George versus the Dragon is well known, but are there any details in the medieval telling of the tale that might surprise people?

St George became a famous soldier-saint following claims that he appeared before the crusader armies at the walls of Jerusalem, bearing a banner with a cross. English crusaders brought this story home and he was made patron saint of England as a result. Early accounts of his life describe his martyrdom at the hands of Roman soldiers; the dragon-slaying episode was added later, possibly from Byzantine sources.

St George is usually depicted on horseback slaying the dragon with his sword or spear and rescuing the maiden who has been left outside the city to be devoured. In the version told in the *Golden Legend*, he stuns the dragon with his sword and the maiden, who is the king's daughter, uses her girdle to lead it to the city, "meek and debonaire". Once there, George tells the terrified townspeople that he will slay the dragon only if they come forward to be baptised and promise to lead a Christian life, which they all agree to do, including the king. Having cut off the head of the tamed dragon, he orders that the body be thrown in the fields outside the city, and it takes four ox-carts to carry the remains out of the city. So this was a very large specimen!

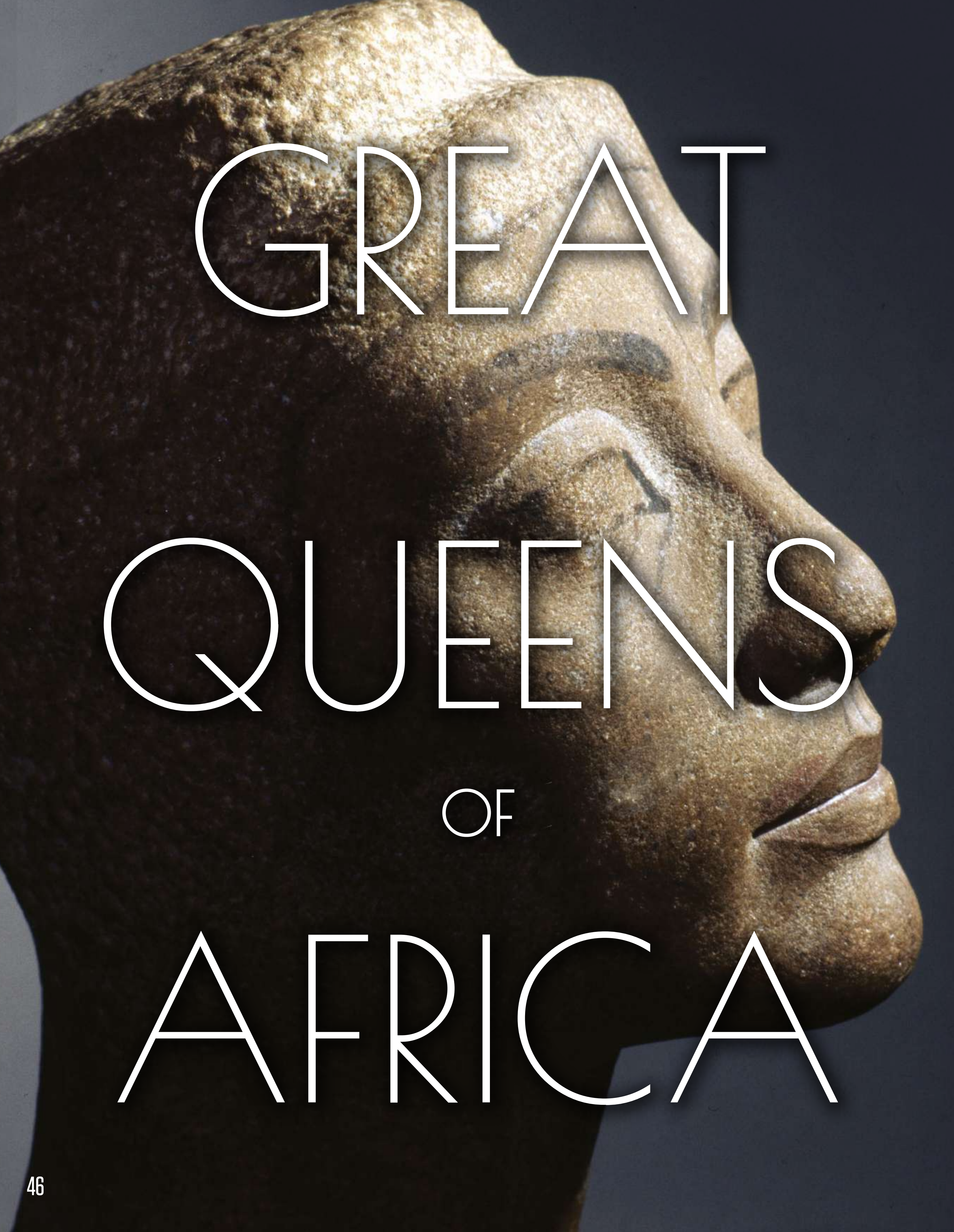
Was there any consistency to how artists of the medieval period tended to depict dragons?

Whereas dragons in Chinese art tend to be uniform, in Western culture they can take many different forms. Earlier medieval examples seem to be more snake- or worm-like and do not breathe fire. Both the Old English word 'wyrm', used in the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf* to refer to Grendel and her clan, and the later import from French, 'dragon' (from the Latin 'draco'), also meant 'snake' and in medieval *Bestiaries* they are described as "the greatest of all serpents." However, over time depictions of fire-breathing reptile-like creatures with crests, armoured tails and bat-like wings became more common and are familiar to us today.

How were dragons associated with the Apocalypse and why would these stories have been popular?

In the biblical *Book of Revelation*, St Michael and the armies of Heaven defeat a seven-headed dragon – "that ancient serpent called Satan" – who brings all forms of evil to the world and attacks the woman "clothed with the sun", mother of a miraculous child (ie the Virgin Mary). Illustrated copies of *Revelation* known as *Apocalypses* were especially popular in England in the Middle Ages, when life was short and the fear of eternal damnation was very real. Images of dragons and of devils devouring humans on Judgement Day served as warnings to everyone. It was imperative to prepare for the possibility of sudden death by living a life of piety and virtue, as defined by the Christian church. Yet people who saw the lurid depictions would have been fascinated as well as terrified, as we are today by frightening creatures in horror movies. ○

GREAT QUEENS OF AFRICA



The powerful royal women who helped Africa's historic states and kingdoms to flourish

Written by Emily Staniforth

Africa as a continent has a rich and diverse history which has often been overlooked by European scholars. From the ancient to the more recent, Africa has produced a wealth of strong and powerful women whose political capabilities and dedication to their people have strengthened nations. When looking to learn more about some of the great queens of African history, it is vital to remember that some information can be considered uncertain at best, especially when it concerns ancient and medieval figures. Throughout the world, a lot of early history is passed down via the medium of storytelling, artefacts and other art forms, as well as writing. History and folklore can often become intertwined. The mystical and religious mixes with the historical and political to create histories that are passed down from generation to generation. Unpicking what is folklore and what is fact can be difficult, yet this absence of certainty when we look at powerful women from Africa's past only makes this subject more fascinating. Some of the queens featured here may not have even existed, while some of them definitely did. Either way, their presence in local, national and international histories has influenced different traditions and cultures, and contributed to the heritage of their states and kingdoms.

THE KENTAKE OF MEROE

Queens of the Kush Kingdom

Reigned c.170 BCE - c.314 CE

The Kentake of Meroe were a line of queens who ruled the Kingdom of Kush in what is now Sudan. Translating as 'Queen Mother' or 'Royal Woman', it is believed that at least some of the Kentake ruled from the city of Meroe as independent sovereigns. It is also possible that some Kentake queens ruled alongside a king, although this is not known for certain. Also referred to as the Candaces of Meroe (the Latinised version), these eight Kentake queens were effective leaders who headed up armies and engaged in international trade and diplomacy.

A lot of what is known about the queens of Kush has been deciphered from archaeological discoveries such as carvings, tombs and hieroglyphics (the Kush kingdom was influenced by the Egyptians), as well as the accounts of contemporary historians such as Pliny the Elder and the brief inclusion of a 'Candace' in the Bible. Though each Kentake queen reigned at a different time with a different agenda, it is clear that most were skilled and capable monarchs who oversaw the growth of Meroe's affluence and influence until the decline of the kingdom in around 350 CE. The archaeological remains of Meroe are indicative of a powerful city that was rich in both wealth and culture.

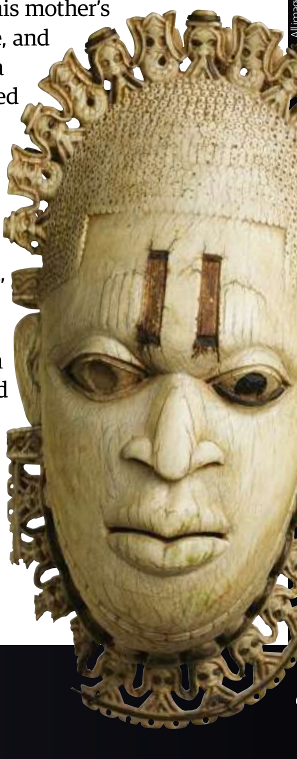
IDIA

Queen Mother of Benin

Reigned c.1504 – ?

The kingdom of Benin, now in modern-day Nigeria, was in a state of civil war at the end of the 15th century after the death of Oba (king) Ozolua. The oba's two sons, Arhuaran and Esigie, took control of separate areas of the kingdom, ruling Udo and Benin City respectively. The civil war between them weakened Benin, and the neighbouring Igala people sent soldiers to try and take over the north of the kingdom. However, Esigie had someone extraordinary on his side: his mother Idia. The second wife of the oba, she was determined to see her son on the throne. With Idia's help, Esigie defeated his brother and saw off the Igala people, becoming the oba of Benin.

Esigie credited his victory to his mother's counsel and mystical knowledge, and Idia was proclaimed as the Iyoba (Queen Mother), a position created especially for her. Esigie also abolished the Benin custom of killing the oba's mother upon her son's succession to the throne. Instead, Idia was given her own palace, the Eguae-Iyoba, and effectively ruled alongside her son. She spent the rest of her life dedicated to helping him rule the Benin kingdom. Revered by the people of Benin as the first woman to go to war, an ivory carving of Idia's face has ensured that she is remembered as the first Iyoba. Upon her death, the Iyoba title passed to Esigie's favourite wife.



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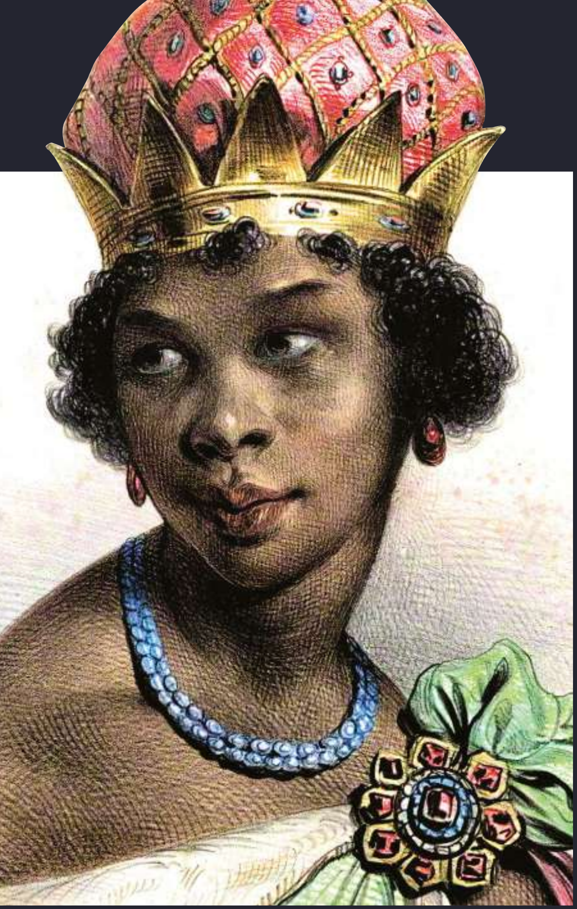


NZINGA MBANDE

Queen of Ndongo and Matamba

Reigned c.1624-63

Queen Nzinga Mbande inherited the state of Ndongo (in present-day Angola) after the death of her brother, the king, around 1624. Populated by the Mbundu people, at the time of her accession Ndongo was facing threats from both Portuguese invaders and other neighbouring African states. To solve both problems simultaneously, Nzinga attempted to neutralise the Portuguese threat by positioning Ndongo as an intermediary state, allying with the Portuguese to end the seizing of Ndongo's people for slavery and to have the support of the Portuguese against other African invaders. She converted to Christianity, taking the name Ana de Souza to show her commitment to this partnership with Portugal. However, Portugal soon turned on Ndongo and Nzinga and her people were forced to flee, conquering the nearby kingdom of Matamba and settling there. After an unsuccessful attempt to regain control of Ndongo with the help of the Netherlands, where she personally led troops into battle, Nzinga focussed her attention on strengthening her power and the economy in Matamba. By the time of her death, Nzinga had established Matamba as a commercial state that operated as an equal of the Portuguese colonies. She also re-converted to Christianity before she died at the age of 81.

A group of Mino warriors, who were originally formed by Tassi Hangbe

TASSI HANGBE

Queen of the Dahomey Kingdom

Reigned c.1705-08

A question mark hangs over the head of Tassi Hangbe, an 18th century queen of the Dahomey Kingdom in what is now the country of Benin. Some historians are sceptical about whether she even existed; others, like Stanley B Alpern, suggest that our limited knowledge of Hangbe's life has arisen from a deliberate attempt to eradicate her from history. "The long silence on [Hangbe] may well have been due not to her non-existence but to a dynastic policy of suppressing her memory," says Alpern in his article *On the Origins of the Amazons of Dahomey.* Oral histories and material evidence point to the existence of Hangbe, who is believed to be the founder of the Mino warriors, a group of female soldiers who fiercely defended their kingdom. It is believed Hangbe was proclaimed Queen of Dahomey after the death of her twin brother, King Akaba, and to enforce her position as a woman on the throne she formed the female-only military regiment. The Mino, christened the Dahomey Amazons by Europeans who encountered them, acted chiefly as royal bodyguards and continued to do so for the subsequent kings of Dahomey after Hangbe was deposed. If Hangbe's successor King Agaja aimed to erase her from Dahomey history, he failed - her legacy survives in the proud tradition of the mighty Mino warriors, who continued to operate until the end of the 19th century.

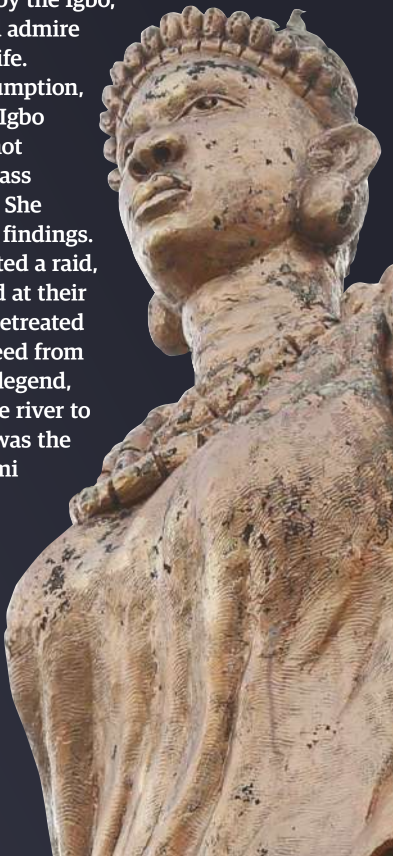
MOREMI AJASORO

Queen of Yoruba

Reigned 12th century

A queen of the Yoruba tribe, Moremi Ajasoro was a wife of the king of the city of Ife, in the south-west of present-day Nigeria. Estimated to have lived during the 12th century, Moremi and the people of Ife experienced regular raids by the neighbouring Igbo tribe, who the Yoruba referred to as "Forest People" because they believed them to be spirits. The Igbo tribe would raid Ife to abduct people for slavery. Having seen her people suffer, Moremi asked the spirit of the river to help her discover their weakness. Then, disguised as a trader, Moremi allowed herself to be captured by the Igbo, trusting that their leader would admire her beauty and make her his wife.

Moremi was right in her assumption, and integrated herself into the Igbo tribe, learning that they were not spirits but people dressed in grass and leaves to scare the Yoruba. She returned to Ife and relayed her findings. The next time the Igbo attempted a raid, torches were lit and brandished at their flammable clothing. The Igbo retreated and the Yoruba people were freed from their oppression. According to legend, Moremi went to the spirit of the river to learn that the price of its help was the sacrifice of her only son. Moremi pleaded for her son's life, to no avail, and she was left with no choice. Upon killing her son, the Yoruba people promised to be her eternal children. The Queen Moremi Statue of Liberty stands as a reminder of her sacrifice.



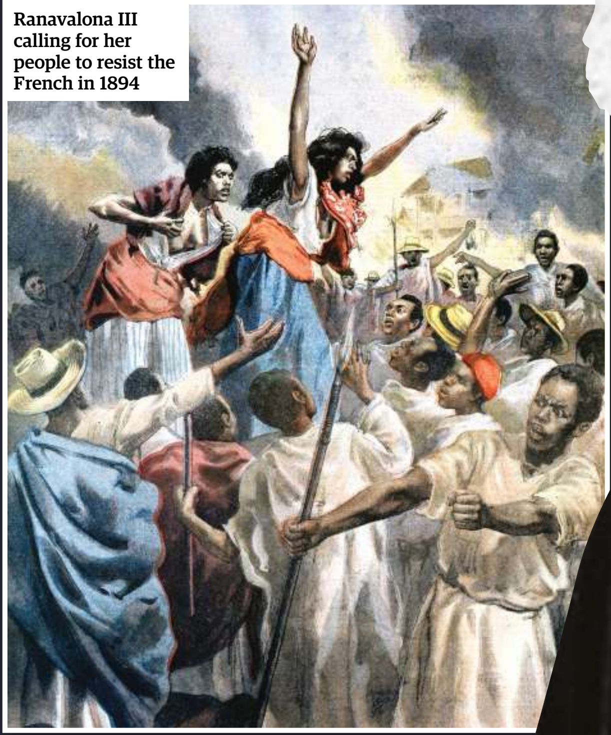
RANAVALONA III

Queen of Madagascar

Reigned 1883-97

As the favourite great niece of Queen Ranavalona II, Princess Razafindrahety was made Queen of Madagascar, at the age of 22, upon the queen's death in 1883. She took the name of her predecessors, becoming Ranavalona III, during Madagascar's transition from being governed by absolute rule to a constitutional monarchy. Widowed shortly before her accession, Ranavalona married the prime minister of Madagascar, Rainilaiarivony, who had also been married to the two previous queens. He was a lot older than the young Ranavalona and there was speculation that Rainilaiarivony was responsible for the death of Ranavalona's first husband.

Despite her youth and largely ceremonial position as queen, Ranavalona took an active role in governance, focussing on retaining Madagascar's independence from the threat of French colonisation. She ensured she was a recognisable and friendly figure to her people, taking part in public engagements and visits to hospitals and schools. However, her efforts could not hold off the French, and in 1895 she was forced to hand over the capital, Tananarive. Ranavalona, along with her family, were exiled to the island of Reunion in 1897 because the French feared her presence could inspire an uprising of the Madasgacan people. After two years she was sent to Algiers, where she lived a comfortable life until she died of an embolism in 1917. Ranavalona was never permitted to return to Madagascar, though her remains were eventually returned to the island, where she is now buried.



Ranavalona III calling for her people to resist the French in 1894

All images © Alamy

NEFERTITI

Pharaoh of Egypt

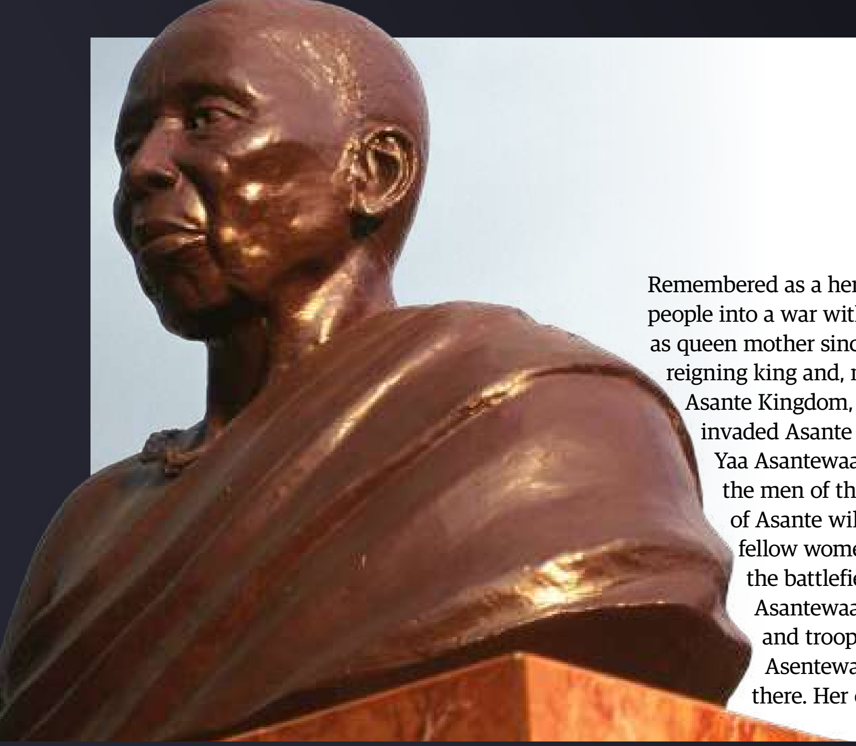
Reigned c.1353 BCE - c.1330 BCE

One of the most recognisable faces of Ancient Egypt, Nefertiti was only reintroduced to the public consciousness in 1912 when a bust of her was discovered by a German archaeologist and put on display in Berlin.

The Great Royal Wife of King Akhenaten, who reigned as pharaoh from around 1353 BCE to 1336 BCE, Nefertiti appears to have been a co-ruler with her husband. It was not uncommon for Egyptian pharaohs to be female, but Nefertiti seems to have been extremely influential. Contemporary images show her in positions of political and religious power, such as driving away enemies, at the reins of chariots, and leading ceremonies of worship. She is also often depicted with accentuated curves alongside her six children, leading some historians to believe that she was considered a living fertility goddess.

Nefertiti's disappearance from history has long divided opinion among historians. All trace of her seems to vanish during Akhenaten's 12th year of rule, with some believing she must have died. However, her body was not found in the royal tombs at Amarna in Upper Egypt. Others think Nefertiti may have ruled Egypt independently after her husband's death under the alternative name Smenkhkare. Whether she died or became pharaoh, the location of Nefertiti's tomb remains a mystery to archaeologists.

Some historians think Nefertiti was worshipped as a living fertility goddess



YAA ASANTEWAA

Queen Mother of Asante

Reigned 1880s – c.1901

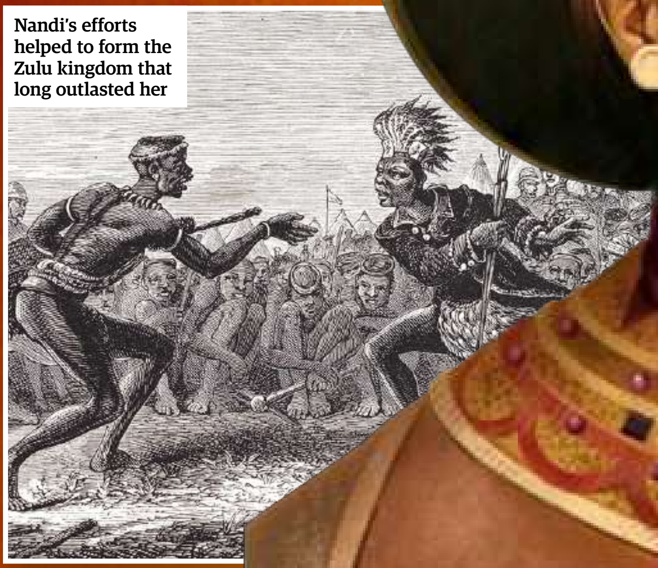
Remembered as a hero of the Asante kingdom, in modern-day Ghana, Yaa Asantewaa led her people into a war with British colonial forces who threatened their independence. Having acted as queen mother since the reign of her brother, Yaa Asantewaa was the main advisor to the reigning king and, most importantly, the custodian of the Golden Stool – the emblem of the Asante Kingdom, symbolic of power and authority over its people. When British troops invaded Asante in 1886 and exiled King Prempeh I and other leaders to the Seychelles, Yaa Asantewaa sought to protect the Golden Stool. Having seen little enthusiasm from the men of the kingdom to go to war, she took charge, proclaiming: "If you the men of Asante will not go forward, then we will. We the women will. I shall call upon my fellow women. We will fight the white men. We will fight until the last of us falls in the battlefields." Leading her army of women and newly inspired men into battle, Yaa Asantewaa was more than a match for the British forces. However, extra resources and troops supplied to the British resulted in a defeat for the Asante kingdom. Yaa Asentewaa was captured and exiled to the Seychelles, living out the rest of her days there. Her courage and determination has ensured her legacy as an almighty queen.

NANDI

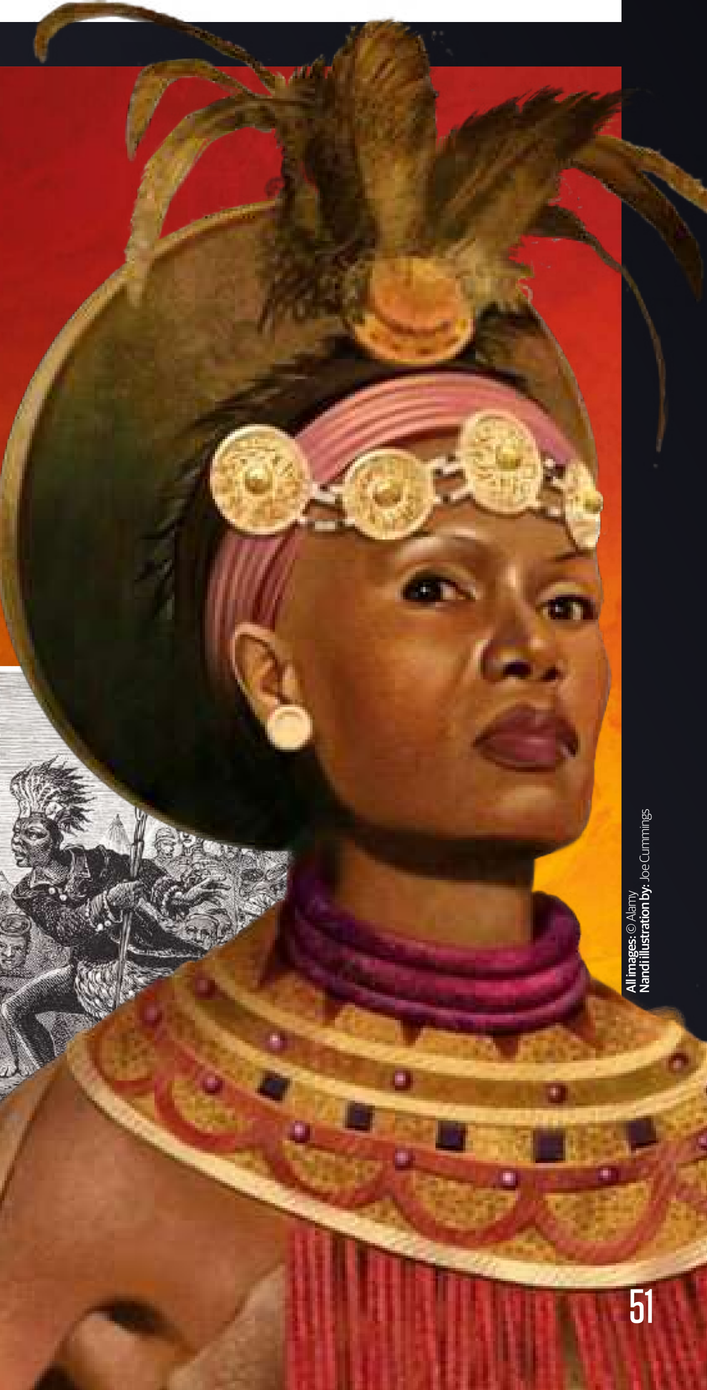
Queen Mother of the Zulu Kingdom

Reigned c.1816-27

Nandi was born into the Langeni tribe in what is now South Africa. Much of what is known about her life has been recorded in oral histories, with a few written sources from people who encountered her also providing information. As a young woman, Nandi is said to have engaged in an illicit relationship with Senzangakhona, the chief of the Zulu kingdom in Southern Africa. The relationship was controversial, not only because the pair were not married, but also because Nandi and Senzangakhona were considered to be too closely related to each other. As a result of their affair, Nandi became pregnant and gave birth to a son she named Shaka. Once Shaka was born, Senzangakhona married Nandi, and she and her son became part of the Zulu royal family, with Nandi holding the lowly position as the chief's third wife. During this time, Nandi gave birth to a second child, this time a daughter. With a reputation for being bad-tempered and difficult, Nandi and her children never felt welcomed in the Zulu kingdom and so left, taking refuge with the Mthethwa people. There Shaka, encouraged by his mother and the Mthethwa chief Dingiswayo, rose through the ranks and became a skilled warrior. Upon the death of Senzangakhona in 1815, Shaka returned to take the chieftainship of Zulu by force from his elder brother. He was also named as the successor of Dingiswayo before his assassination in 1817. As chief, Shaka helped the Zulu kingdom to thrive. Nandi, as mother of the chief, held an incredibly influential position, acting as an advisor to her son. When she died in 1827, she was given a funeral fit for a queen and Shaka enforced a period of public mourning. Her resilience and determination to provide for her son, despite the hardships she went through, has seen her revered as a great figure of the Zulu kingdom.



Nandi's efforts helped to form the Zulu kingdom that long outlasted her



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Nandi illustration by: Joe Cummings

THE DARK SIDE *of* BEETHOVEN

The classical composer created some of the world's most famous musical works, but his personal life was filled with turmoil

Written by Callum McKelvie

Alongside figures such as Johann Sebastian Bach and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven is widely regarded as one of the world's greatest classical composers. In his lifetime Beethoven crafted some 722 works, comprising string quartets, sonatas and symphonies. Yet like many artistic geniuses, Beethoven's personal life was tumultuous and he himself developed a reputation as a difficult individual. An upbringing with an alcoholic and abusive father, who was determined for his son to become a musical prodigy, deeply affected the young man. As the composer entered the final few decades of his life and faced increasing health issues and depression, he became involved in a bitter battle for the custody of his nephew - perhaps seeking a musical prodigy of his own. These events reveal an often overlooked side to the life of the renowned composer, particularly when remembering masterworks such as *Für Elise*. It's a troubled and distressing side - the dark side of Beethoven.

Beethoven was born around 16 December 1770 in Bonn, Germany, with the exact date of his birth being disputed. The oldest of three brothers, Beethoven's father (Johann van Beethoven, a notorious alcoholic) appeared determined to turn his young son into a musical prodigy and taught ▶

Ludwig van Beethoven

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EXPERT BIO

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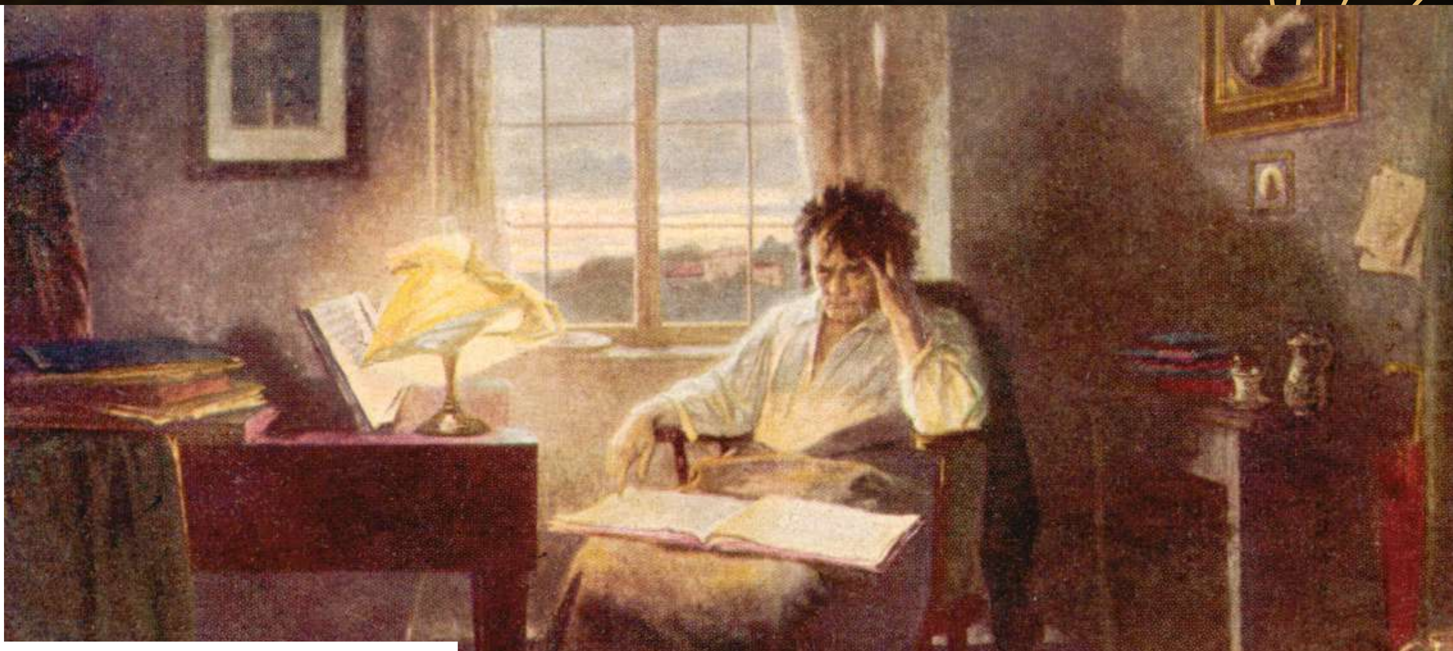
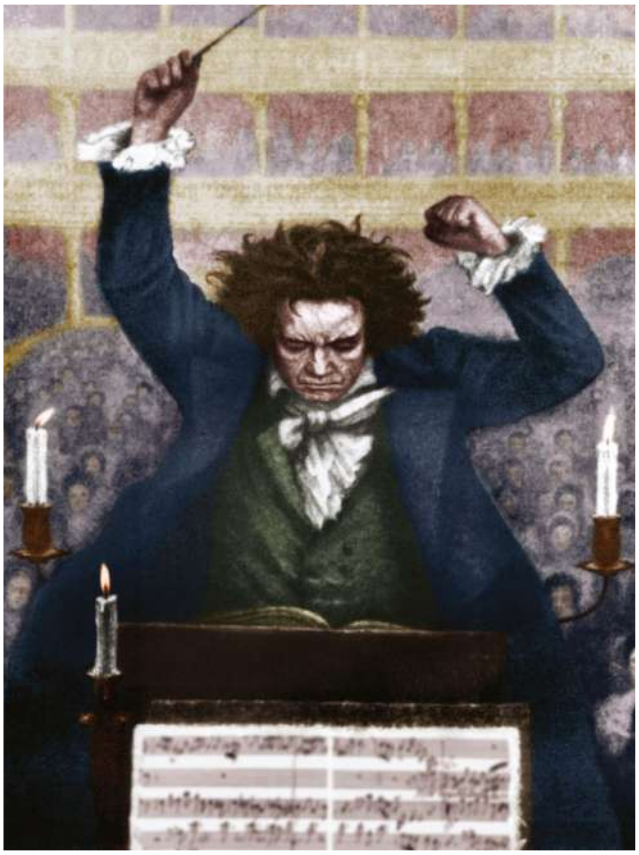
JAN SWAFFORD

Jan Swafford is an author and composer who has written biographies of many classical composers. Among his books are *Mozart: The Reign of Love* (Faber & Faber, 2020) and *Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph* (Faber & Faber, 2015).





TOP An artist's impression of Ludwig van Beethoven composing

ABOVE Beethoven continued to conduct his own music even as he was losing his hearing

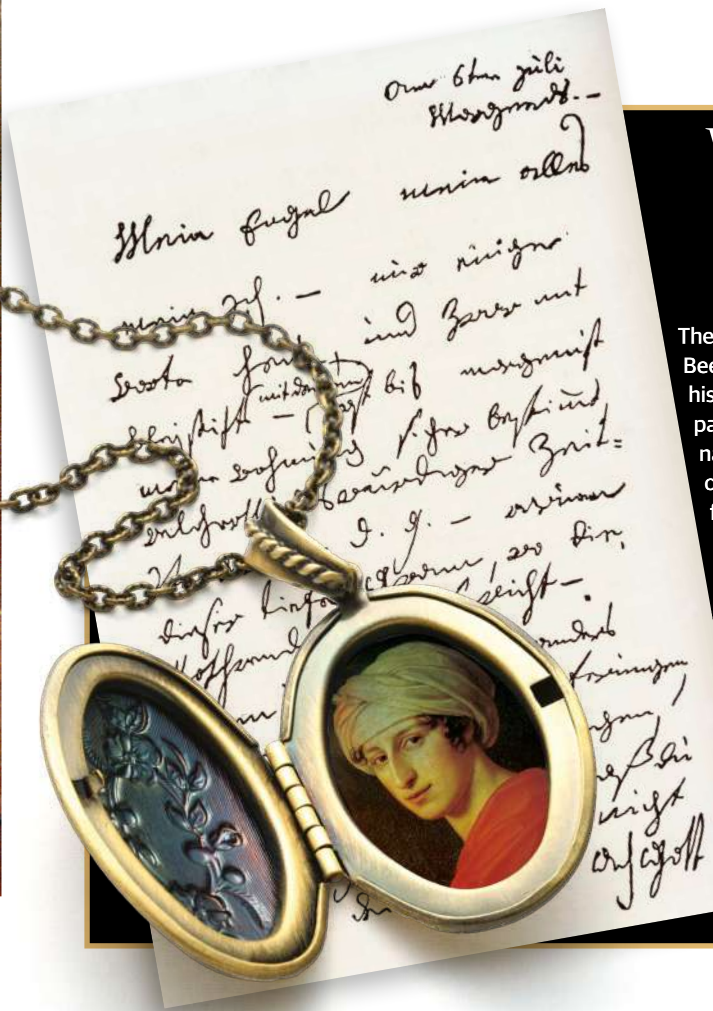
him with such discipline and zeal that it was clearly abusive. The young Beethoven was regularly forced to forgo sleep for extra practice and was violently beaten should he hit a wrong note. Having no real academic ability aside from a musical one, at the age of ten Beethoven left school to focus on his musical talents full time. Three years later he took up a position as court organist in a desperate attempt to support his family as his father slipped further and further into alcoholism.

But what of his relationship with his two brothers? Particularly with the older of the pair, Kaspar Anton Karl Van Beethoven, his relationship was a fractured and difficult one. "Karl was musical, he composed a little, but he worked full time as some kind of a minor government clerk," says Jan Swafford, composer and author of *Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph*. "He and Ludwig fought like crazy and at one point they even had a fist fight in the streets. Karl had been managing his brother's publications and sent some music to a publisher Ludwig didn't want him to. They ended up brawling in the street." His other brother, Nikolaus Johann van Beethoven, was a pharmacist who made his name selling medical equipment to Napoleon's army following the invasion of Austria in 1809. Ludwig likewise struggled in his relationship with Nikolaus, particularly when the latter stated he would be preferred to be known as Johann - after their father. When Nikolaus revealed his intention to marry a housekeeper, Therese Obermeyer, the two brothers likewise let their tempers get the better of them and similarly came to violent blows.

> "THE YOUNG BEETHOVEN WAS REGULARLY FORCED TO FORGO SLEEP FOR EXTRA PRACTICE AND WAS VIOLENTLY BEATEN SHOULD HE HIT A WRONG NOTE"

Beethoven's repute as a composer truly began in the late 18th century, when he made his public debut in Vienna in 1795 - though it is unknown which piano concerto he chose to play. A mere five years later he debuted his *Symphony No.1 in C Major*. Yet it is around this time that an event occurred that in some ways defines our modern perception of both Beethoven and his career: between the age of roughly 25 to 28 he began to lose his hearing. Why Beethoven went deaf remains something of a mystery. Some speculate that it may have been the result of typhus. "Beethoven himself reported that he'd been having a big argument with a tenor," Swafford tells us, relating one notorious theory. "The guy left the house but came back and was pounding on the door. Beethoven jumped up in a fury but fell down, landing on his face. He said when he got up that's when he started losing his hearing." Other suggested reasons include lead poisoning and his unusual habit of plunging his head into cold water or having it poured over him, purportedly to keep himself awake.

However, research by historian Theodore Albrecht at Kent State University, Ohio, has called into question just how deaf the composer may have been. "There are all sorts of accounts of his actually hearing,



WHO WAS THE IMMORTAL BELOVED?

The identity of the mysterious recipient of Beethoven's love letter has obsessed historians for centuries

The mysterious love letter found following Beethoven's death continues to obsess historians, no doubt due to the unbridled passion on display and the mysterious nature of the recipient. It's been the subject of romance novels, music and numerous films, many of which seek to answer the question: who was the immortal beloved?

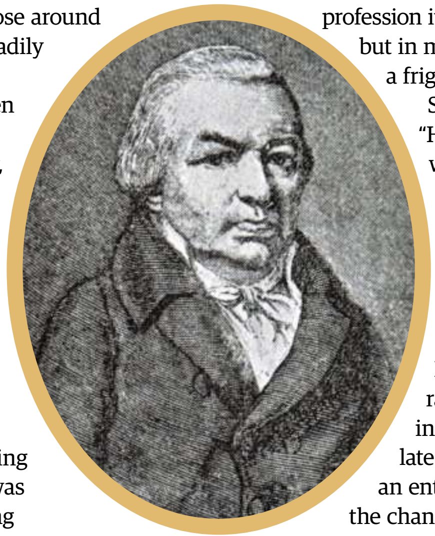
Bernard Rose's 1994 film *Immortal Beloved*, starring Gary Oldman as the composer, concluded that the immortal beloved was in fact Johanna van Beethoven, Ludwig's sister-in-law. However, due to the legal battle over custody of Beethoven's nephew, Karl, as well as Beethoven's well-known opinion of her (see page 56), this seems highly unlikely.

The most likely contender for a long time was Josephine Brunsvik, a woman to whom Beethoven almost certainly wrote 13 other love letters. These were only discovered following the end of World War II, revealing that the composer had suggested the two develop a physical relationship, only to be rebutted.

A more recent candidate is Antonie Brentano, an art collector and philanthropist who was a close friend of Beethoven. Bretano suffered from regular illnesses and at one point Beethoven would play the piano in the anteroom outside her bedroom. She was married to Franz Betrano, a merchant who was 15 years older than her, which doubtless prevented any escalation of an affair between herself and Beethoven. However, given that we know that the immortal beloved was married and it's speculated that she may have returned his affections, this does make her candidacy all the more likely.

it's that most of us have never read them before," Albrecht told the BBC in a 2020 interview. Albrecht's evidence primarily comes from Beethoven's 'conversation books', the notebooks used to communicate with those around him as his hearing steadily worsened. Over recent years Albrecht has been translating the books into English. Naturally, the very existence of the conversation book implies that Beethoven's hearing had at least deteriorated to a level where he would require their use. He began using the books in 1818, suggesting that by this point he was dealing with something close to profound deafness, even if Albrecht's research suggests he never totally lost his hearing.

By age 45, Beethoven's deafness had reached its peak. The effect this had on the gifted composer was to drive him towards isolation, completely cutting himself off from the outside world. Those select friends who were allowed to visit him had to communicate with the artistic genius through the written word. "For two years I have avoided almost all social gatherings because it is impossible for me to say to people 'I am deaf'," Beethoven once wrote. "If I belonged to any other profession it would be easier, but in my profession it is a frightful state."



Swafford explains: "He kept playing even when he could hardly hear anything at all. He kept improvising and essentially composing at the piano despite the fact he couldn't hear it." Remarkably, however, rather than wallowing in darkness Beethoven's late style was affected in an entirely different way; the changes in his personal life resulting in an existential tone instead of an unpleasant one. "It became very interior and inward and often quite spiritual in an entirely unique way," says Swafford. "It was a kind of spirituality that had never been heard in music before, particularly in pieces such as the *Holy Song of Thanksgiving* and a number of his later string quartets." These pieces were often conducted when Beethoven himself was physically ill and deeply depressed. "When he wrote the C-sharp minor string quartet, one of his most brilliant and inspiring pieces, he was filling up with water – he had advanced liver disease and was drinking heavily," says Swafford. "He had to have a kind of girdle to hold his guts together. He was just in terrible shape but he created this astoundingly exalted piece."

LEFT Beethoven's father, Johann van Beethoven

If Beethoven's musical talent remained unaffected by his deteriorating health and increasing depression, so too was his emotional passion. Easily one of the most famous events of this latter stage of Bethoven's life is a letter he wrote which is now considered one of history's most famous love letters. Written in 1812, the letter was hidden in a drawer and only discovered by a friend following the composer's death. Nicknamed 'The Immortal Beloved' letter after the name Beethoven gives to its intended, the real identity of the recipient is still unknown. "When Beethoven fell in love it was like the woman opened her door to

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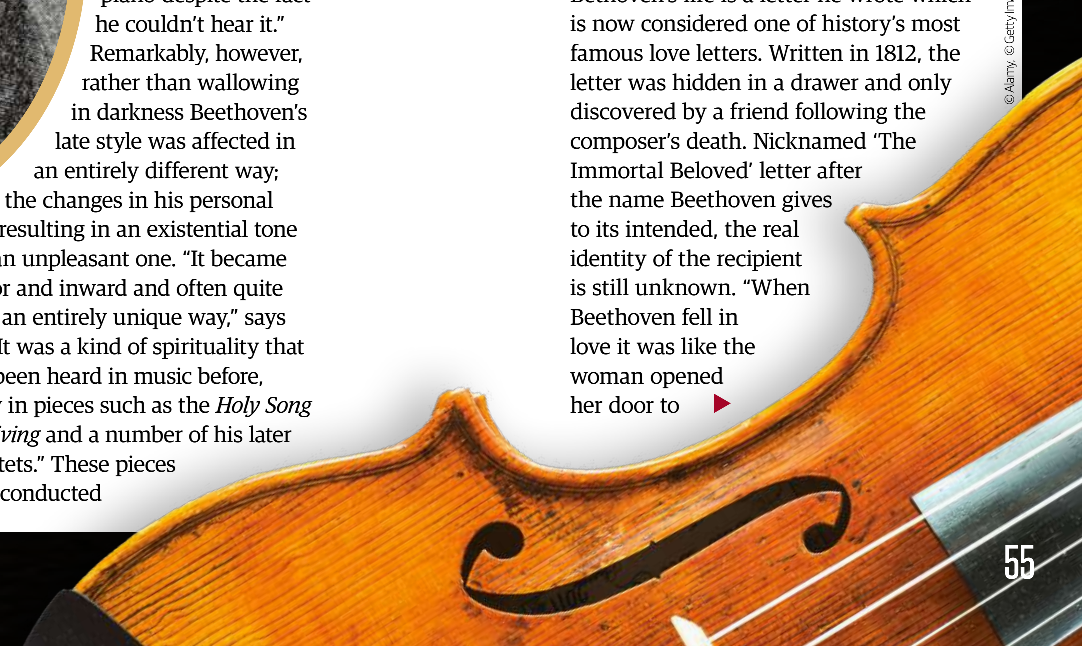

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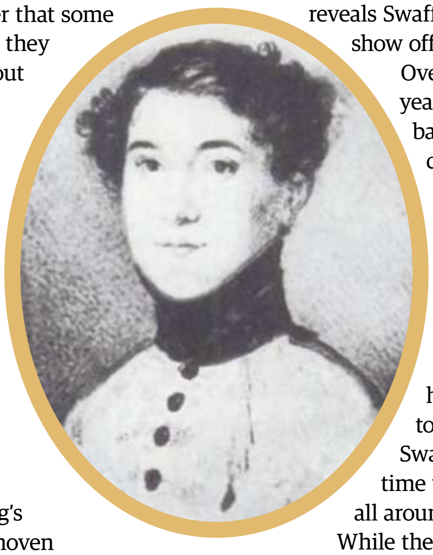
a whirlwind," says Swafford. "He was just completely out of control and frantic." The letter certainly contains a number of passages that speak to Beethoven's overwrought state, for example: "Even in bed my ideas yearn towards you, my Immortal Beloved, here and there joyfully, then again sadly, awaiting from Fate, whether it will listen to us. I can only live, either altogether with you or not at all." However, any long-term romance was not to be, partly because the immortal beloved was probably married and partly because she may not have been able to cope with Beethoven's unbridled passion, and the mysterious object of his affections called off the affair. Beethoven, of course, was heartbroken. "After that some of his friends said that they wouldn't even talk about the shape he was in and he was probably drinking heavily," Swafford notes.

Yet there was another object of his affections. Beethoven's brother, the aforementioned Kaspar Karl, had a young son, Karl van Beethoven. Following the death of Kaspar, on 15 November 1815 at the age of 41, Ludwig's nephew Karl van Beethoven was seen by the composer as the 'heir to the throne'. According to musicologist Peter Clive, on the day preceding his brother's death Ludwig had convinced Kaspar Karl to make him sole guardian despite the original intention of him being co-guardian with Johanna van Beethoven, the boy's mother. Beethoven sought custody of Karl as he deemed Johanna to be unfit and immoral. "She probably had affairs, Beethoven accused her of having a lover in the house when her husband was dying," Swafford tells us. Such was Beethoven's disgust at her alleged behaviour that he often referred to her as the 'Queen of the Night' (referring to the evil queen in Mozart's *Magic Flute*.) Her relationship with Beethoven's brother Kaspar Karl was certainly a tumultuous one, especially taking into account Kaspar Karl's own troubled personality. "At one point her husband put a knife through her hand on the table during an argument," reveals Swafford. "She liked to show off the scar."



Over the following years a protracted legal battle took place, during which for large portions of time Karl was removed from his mother's care and lived with his uncle, beginning when he was nine years old. "Periodically he would run back to his mother," says Swafford, "which every time was absolute trauma all around."

While the relationship between uncle and nephew during the initial period was certainly troubled, it was nothing compared to the nightmare of the young man's teenage years. Beethoven saw Karl as a potential musical prodigy and employed Carl Czerny as a teacher for

"HE BELIEVED HIS TALENT WAS OWED TO HUMANITY AND HE WORKED HIMSELF TO DEATH FOR THAT IDEAL"

LEFT Ludwig van Beethoven is regarded as one of the greatest classical composers the world has ever seen

RIGHT A portrait of a young Karl van Beethoven, Ludwig's troubled nephew

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

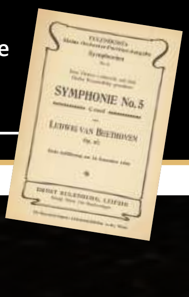
Five of Beethoven's most famous masterpieces

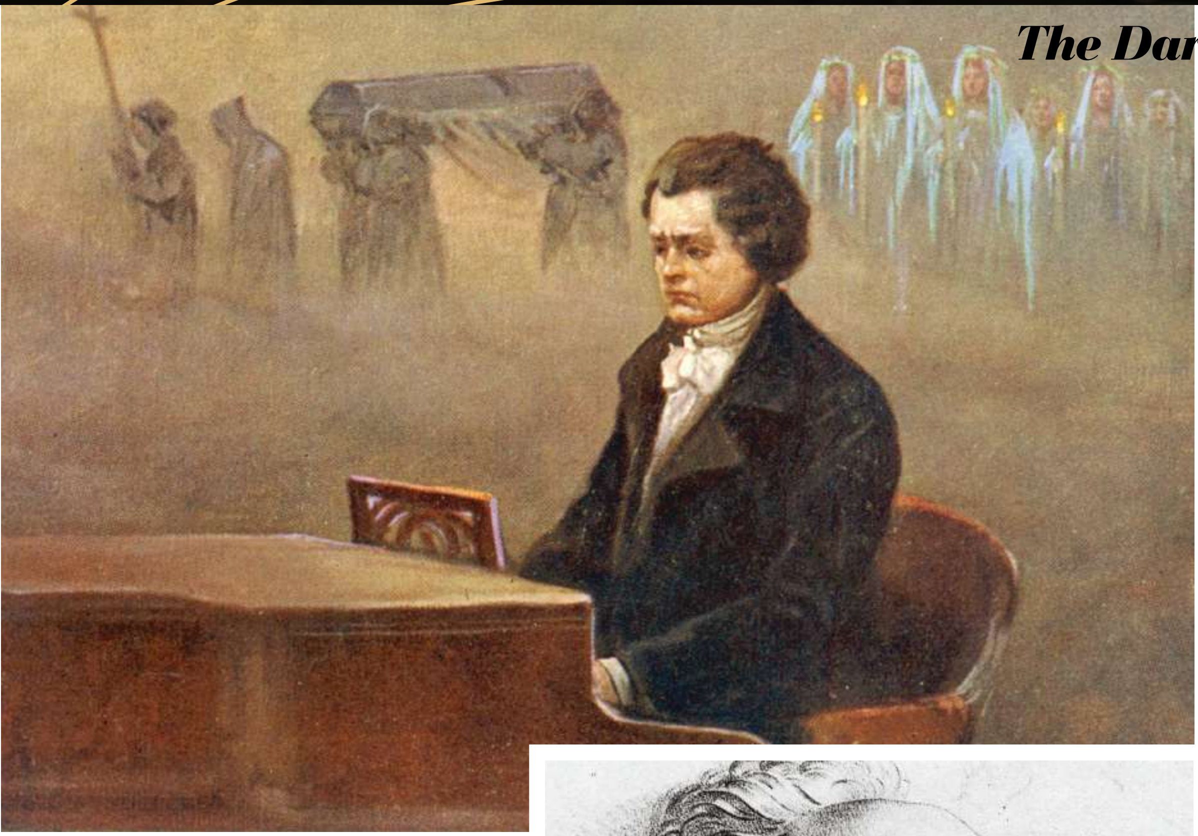
Für Elise

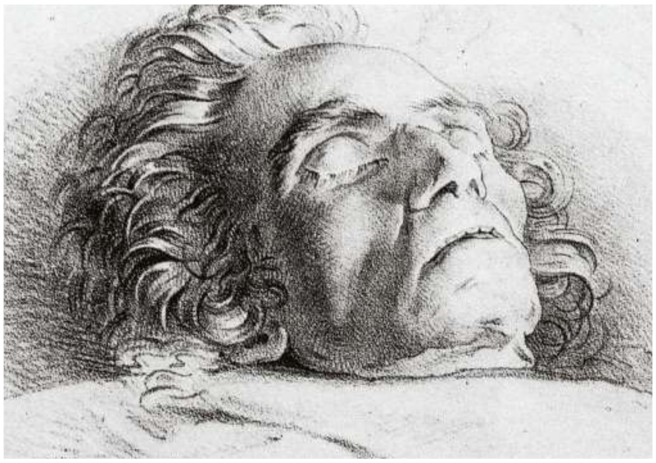
Easily one of Beethoven's most recognisable compositions, a solo for the piano, Für Elise was first published in 1867 – some 40 years after Beethoven's death. Like the immortal beloved, who exactly 'Elise' was remains unknown. It is also suspected that the version we are now familiar with is an earlier unedited one, despite Beethoven himself having made revisions.

Symphony No.5

Considered to be one of the most famous pieces of classical music ever and easily recognised due to its foreboding four-note opening (trust us, you'll instantly recognise it when you hear it!) *Symphony No.5* is a masterpiece of classical music. Beethoven himself described these four notes as "fate knocking on the door".







the young man. When Czerny informed Beethoven that his nephew had no musical talent whatsoever, the composer still persisted in forcing lessons upon the boy. Beginning in 1824, Karl studied at the University of Vienna as a student of philology. Once his nephew left home, Beethoven became increasingly obsessive and would ask his friends to spy on the young man. He verbally attacked Karl's own friends and flew into a rage when his nephew informed him of a desire to pursue a military career.

Finally, in July 1826, the constant interference in the life of the now 20-year-old proved too much for the young man to bear. One day Karl sold his watch and used the money to purchase the second of two pistols he had procured. Firing at both temples, one shot missed completely and the other inflicted a mere flesh wound. Upon being discovered he was asked not to be taken to his uncle, but to his mothers house. Beethoven visited him only for Karl to complain upon his leaving: "If only he would not show himself again!"

Why Beethoven was so obsessive over his nephew, we will never truly know. "I think his motivations were complicated," Swafford explains. "I think he genuinely believed that Karl's mother was evil and he had to save the kid. I think he also needed to have somebody in the house who loved him. In the end, Karl became his focus for years. He gave him a reason to live and a reason to compose; he had to stay alive and he had to write music to make money to support Karl." Following his attempt on his life, on 2 January 1827, Karl joined the army, and just a year later Beethoven would be dead. The two men bid each other an unemotional goodbye and would never see each other again. When being questioned by a police magistrate after his non-fatal suicide attempt, Karl had stated matter-of-factly that his overbearing uncle had "tormented him too much," and that he "became worse because my uncle wanted me to be better."

As the composer's final days loomed, Beethoven's health was in increasingly poor shape. During the last decade of his life he almost certainly drank too much, over-indulging in wine. He endured frequent abdominal pain and regular bouts of diarrhoea, indicating irritable bowel syndrome. He also suffered from cirrhosis of the liver. On the 1 December 1826 Beethoven returned to Vienna in an open-topped carriage and, having also spent a night at an unheated inn, returned home suffering from a violent chill. When examined on the 5th it was discovered that he had developed jaundice and pneumonia, and his liver was failing. Over the following months Beethoven clung to life, needing the excess fluid draining via an incision in his abdomen. Finally, on 24 March 1827, he fell into a deep coma. Two days later, during a violent thunderstorm, Beethoven awoke momentarily and then passed away. The genius composer was no more.

Beethoven was an incredibly complex man whose contributions to music cannot be overstated. "He was not a fundamentally 'mean' person," Swafford explains. "He wanted to be a good person and tried to be, but he was deeply self-involved and could only see other people through his own lens. He had no understanding of the motivations and needs of other people at all." Certainly when focussing on the 'dark side' of Beethoven, it's very easy to over-indulge in this notion and allow it to define our idea of who he was. Like all of us, Beethoven experienced both ups and downs and had both his good side and his bad. "He was somebody who tried as best he could," Swafford concludes. "He considered himself a servant of humanity. He believed his talent was owed to humanity and he worked himself to death for that ideal."

TOP A rendition of Beethoven contemplating his death as he composes

ABOVE Ludwig van Beethoven on his death bed in 1827

Symphony No.9

Beethoven's final complete symphony, it's famous for incorporating Friedrich Schiller's poem *Ode to Joy*. Upon his death, Beethoven was working on a tenth symphony but this final completed work is considered by many to be his masterpiece.

Piano Sonata 14

German critic Ludwig Rellstab described this piece's opening movement as reminiscent of moonlight flittering across Lake Lucerne. So indelible was this image that the idea stuck and Beethoven's Piano Sonata 14 was forever known as the 'Moonlight Sonata'.

Fidelio

Beethoven's only opera, the first performance of *Fidelio* took place a mere nine days after Napoleon began his occupation of Vienna. The opera, which tells how a woman disguises herself to rescue her husband from a political prison, must have felt particularly timely and relevant.

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HISTORY OF SUPERSTITIONS

From black cats to touching wood, we explain some popular and unusual folk customs from around the world

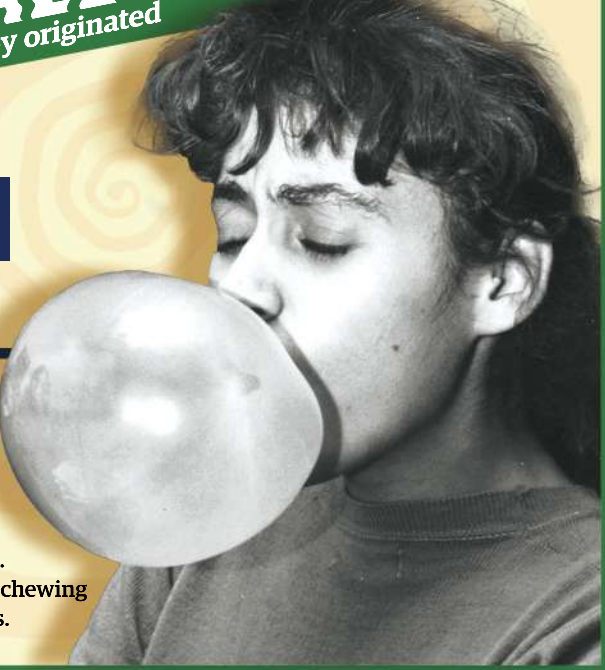
Written by David Williamson

Even the most rational of us probably hold on to a few superstitions. You may touch wood to stave off something bad happening or have a particular pair of socks you prefer to wear when your favourite team plays. Whether you really 'believe' in these little acts of ritual isn't so important. They become a part of our daily routine; small connections to family and community that we share, and fun stories we tell each other, laughing in the face of fate and fortune. But where did these odd superstitions originate? We hope to give you some insight here.

STRANGE TALES

Obscure superstitions and where they originated

CHEWING GUM AT NIGHT



This modern-day superstition comes from Turkey, where it is believed that to chew gum at night is a sure sign of bad luck. The Turkish believe that at night the gum transforms into the flesh of the dead and chewing it will bring horrendous repercussions from the spirit world. Curiously, a 1999 medical study suggested that chewing gum at night is a good way to relieve sleepiness.

SITTING AT THE CORNER OF THE TABLE

There are many traditions associated with weddings and marriage, such as 'something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue'; not seeing the bride the day before the wedding; and catching the bouquet. But what if you never get to the wedding day in the first place? In Russia and Hungary if an unmarried person (often a woman) finds themselves sitting alone at the corner of a table, then it's believed to be a sign that they will never marry. But there may be a sociological explanation for this: if you are on the edge of things and not in the middle of the conversation, then the chances of meeting your future love are drastically reduced!

ITCHY PALMS

Some superstitions appear in seemingly unconnected parts of the world. In South America, Turkey, Nigeria and Western Europe if your palm itches then it's thought to be a sign that money is coming your way. It's sometimes recommended you don't scratch the itch, but place your hand in your pocket so you keep the luck. This is often limited to the right palm, with the left palm itching indicating that you're about to lose money. One suggestion of its origin dates back to the Anglo-Saxons and a medical treatment of rubbing silver on diseased skin to cure it.

UNLUCKY NUMBER FOUR

Many people in China and Japan will avoid the number four because in their respective languages the words for 'four' and the word for 'death' are very similar in pronunciation. This is taken very seriously, with some buildings not having a fourth floor. It's even caused traffic issues in Beijing, as reported by *Bloomberg* in 2015. A congestion measure in the city restricted cars with license plates ending in different numbers on different days, but so few people drive cars ending in four that it becomes the worst day for traffic in the city. The number eight in China, on the other hand, is lucky because the Mandarin word is similar to a word meaning 'to prosper'.

三樓
3 F
二樓
2 F
1 F
一樓
G F
地下

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BAD LUCK

Things to avoid and why we avoid them

WALKING UNDER LADDERS

Sometimes superstitions have an element of common sense. Since you may have no idea who is up the ladder and what might fall on your head, there's a certain amount of practicality to this superstition. However, the superstition of not walking under a ladder leaning against a wall may have originated as a breaking of the magical triangle of the Holy Trinity, which for deeply religious cultures was more than enough to be doomed to eternal damnation. The ancient Egyptians also regarded the triangle as a shape to be revered as it had its own magical powers and ladders were climbed by the gods.

SPILLING SALT

A substance we take for granted now, for centuries salt was a valuable and sought-after luxury. Salt would change the flavour of food and would preserve valuable meat through long winters to keep your family alive, and as such it became a symbol of longevity and purity. For something so precious, it is not surprising that spilling it was considered bad luck. In Da Vinci's painting *The Last Supper* it is the traitor Judas who has spilled the salt. To ward off the bad luck, and even the Devil who was racing up behind you, it was imperative that you threw the salt over your shoulder to avert disaster. The Aztecs also believed that salt possessed 'godly' qualities.

FRIDAY 13TH

Friday
13
June

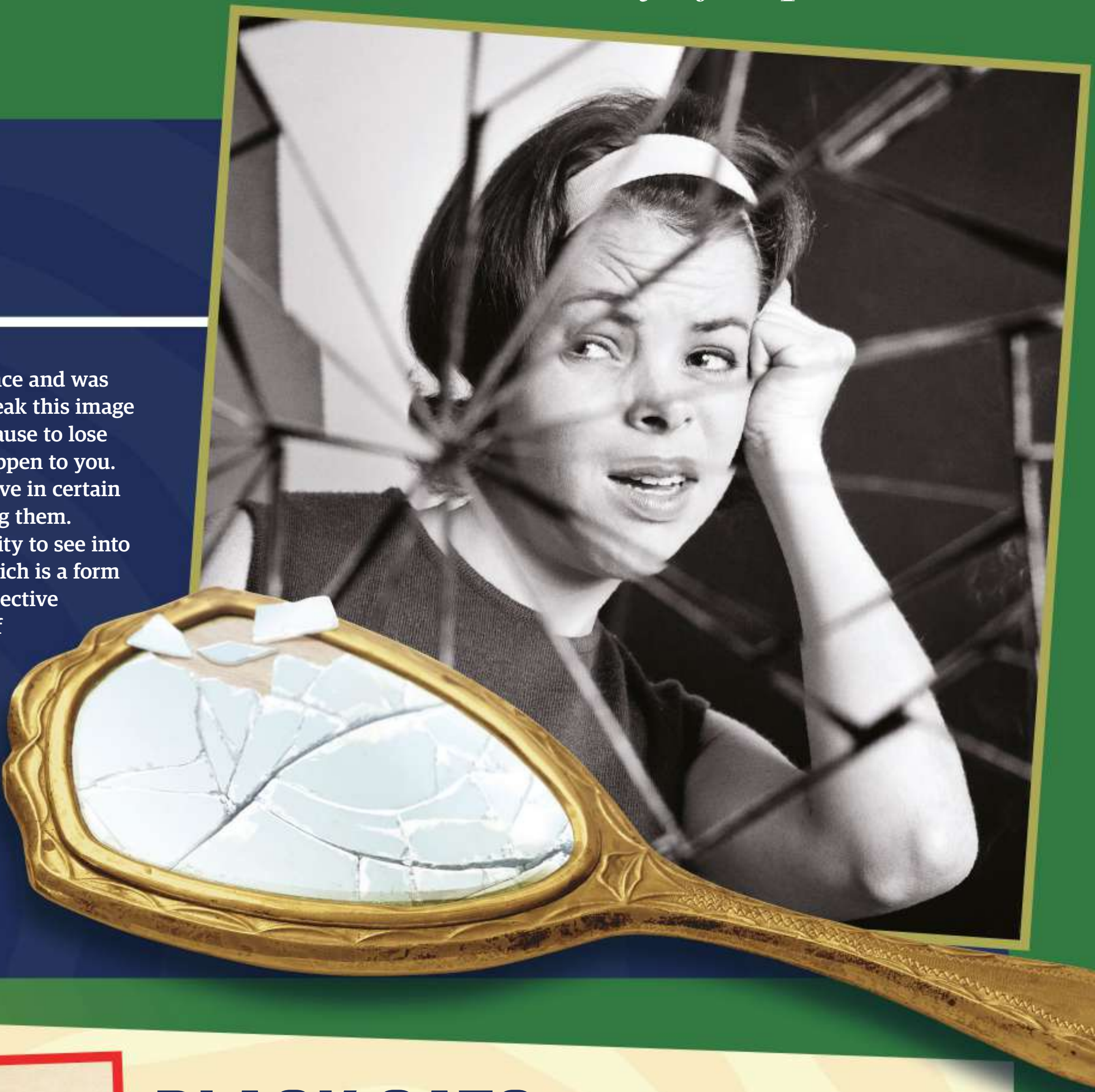
The number 13 is considered to be unlucky in a number of cultures. As with many superstitions the origins lie in more than one place. One possible association between the number 13 and bad luck is that at the Last Supper the traitor Judas was thought to be the 13th guest at the meal. However, many believe the fear of this dreaded date is linked to a true historical event. On Friday 13 October 1307, scores of French Knights Templar were rounded up by agents of King Philip, tortured and then put to death for heresy.

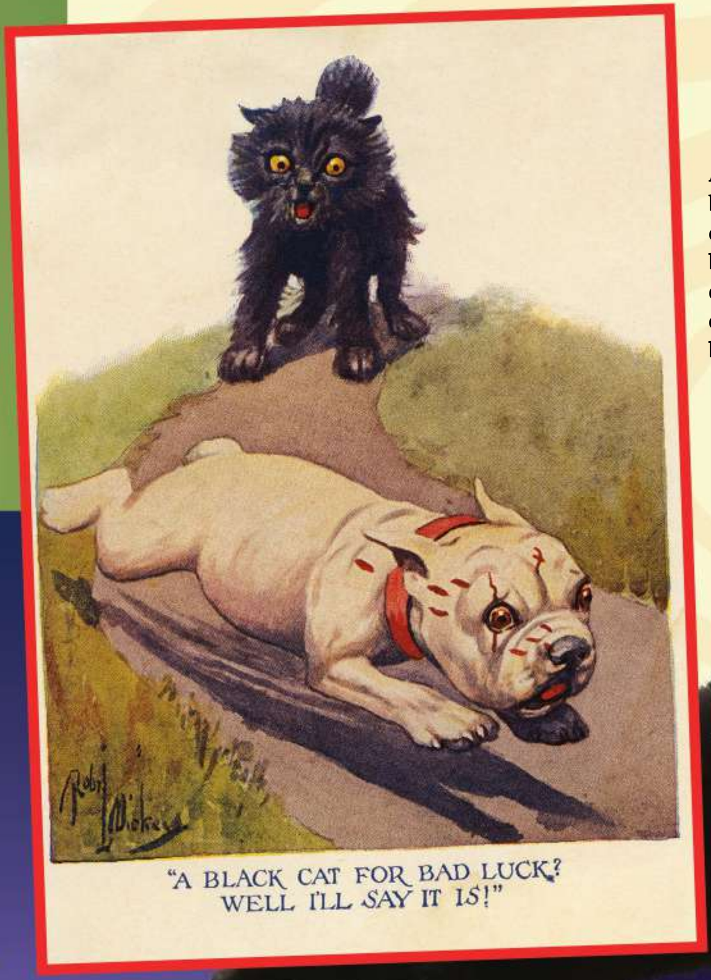
OPENING AN UMBRELLA INDOORS

Umbrellas are not always for rain – they can be for shade from the burning sun. And so it was for the Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt, who had the exclusive right to be shielded from the baking heat while their subjects fried. Opening a sunshade inside would offend the sun god. A slightly more modern interpretation suggests a belief that fairies and pixies might hide in upturned umbrellas and could be accidentally released in the home. A less glamorous yet more practical story behind the superstition comes from Victorian times, when opening a brolly inside could shower the room with raindrops and soak furniture and clothes; not to mention the possibility of injury to someone in the room as the metal spokes unfolded. Perhaps this superstition is just common sense!

BROKEN MIRROR

The mirror had an almost magical significance and was believed to be a reflection of the soul. To break this image was bringing on almost certain disaster because to lose your soul was the worst thing that could happen to you. Mirrors would have been incredibly expensive in certain eras, adding greater importance to protecting them. Mirrors were also strongly linked to the ability to see into the future or perform spells like scrying, which is a form of divination that involves staring into a reflective surface. If that surface was smashed, then of course the future looked bleak! It was the ancient Romans who added seven years of bad luck if you broke a mirror as they believed that was the time it took for the soul to heal itself.




"A BLACK CAT FOR BAD LUCK?
WELL I'LL SAY IT IS!"

BLACK CATS

A black cat crossing your path has long been seen as an omen of bad luck. Not only is black the colour of darkness, but also death and the Devil, and dating back to the medieval era black cats were commonly considered to be the familiars of witches or perhaps were witches themselves transformed into cats. It was also thought that a black cat was actually the Devil himself. So deep was this fear that black cats would sometimes be put to death, although killing a cat was also considered bad luck in some cultures.

GOOD LUCK

The never-ending search for blessings

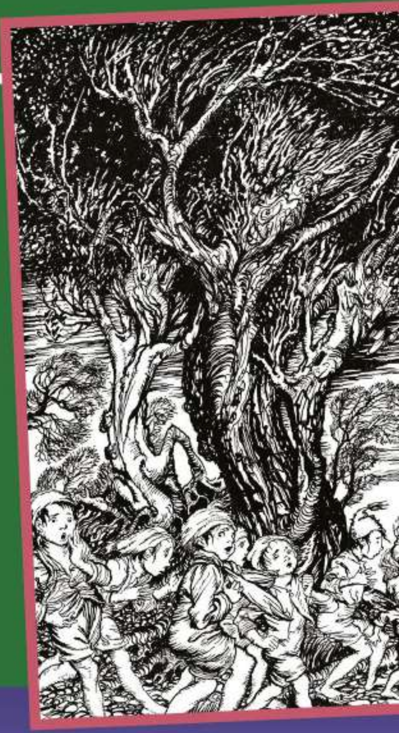
HORSESHOE ON THE DOOR

In a world before mechanisation a horse was an essential and valuable part of everyday life, and to own a horse was often a symbol of wealth. As a result, items associated with horses (even a picture of one) were considered positive. To nail a horseshoe to your door - especially pointing up so good luck could fall inside - was to bless your house with good fortune and ward off the evils of the Devil. Turn the horseshoe around the other way and it was an ancient symbol of the female vulva and would bring fertility to those who lived there.

FINGER CROSSING

Even if we believe we are not superstitious, many of us cannot help crossing our fingers, even in jest. It is a symbol of hope and in some cases a means by which we can say something we don't really mean and get away with it! It may have been a subtle greeting among early Christians, using the symbolic cross of Christ to remain secret and safe from persecution. Another possibility is that it derived from archers during the Hundred Years' War, crossing their fingers in the sign of the cross for luck as they drew their bows.

KNOCKING ON WOOD



Religion once again plays a major part in this particular superstition, but interestingly it could have either a pagan or Christian root to its meaning. In Britain the tradition is to 'touch wood' rather than knock, and this may have its origins in the pagan belief that trees held spirits that could be used for healing or for bringing good fortune. Trees would be touched in order to communicate with the spirits and tap into their mysterious powers.

SAYING BLESS YOU

Saying 'bless you' or 'gesundheit' (meaning 'health') to someone when they sneeze is a common act of politeness in much of the world. One theory of its origin lies in the Black Death, which ravaged Europe during the Middle Ages. A cold was a symptom of the plague and so to bless someone after a sneeze was a way of hoping - rather against the odds - that the disease would not take their life. Another theory, however, is much more ancient and is the belief that to sneeze was to release a part of your soul, which could then be captured by the Devil, and to say 'bless you' was the hope that you would not then come to any harm. The custom appears to go back at least as far as ancient Rome, with Pliny the Elder referencing it in his *Natural History* in 77 CE.

RABBIT'S FOOT

A very common example of what could be seen as a 'lucky charm', a rabbit's foot might be placed in an infant's cradle to ward off evil spirits. The concept of the lucky rabbit's foot appears to have been popularised in America, based on earlier histories that claimed it had medicinal benefits to protect against colic or gout. Samuel Pepys carried a hare's foot, supposedly to cure his abdominal pain. There was also a medieval belief that rabbits had the power of second sight and could warn against approaching evil.

HOW SUPERSTITIOUS ARE WE REALLY?

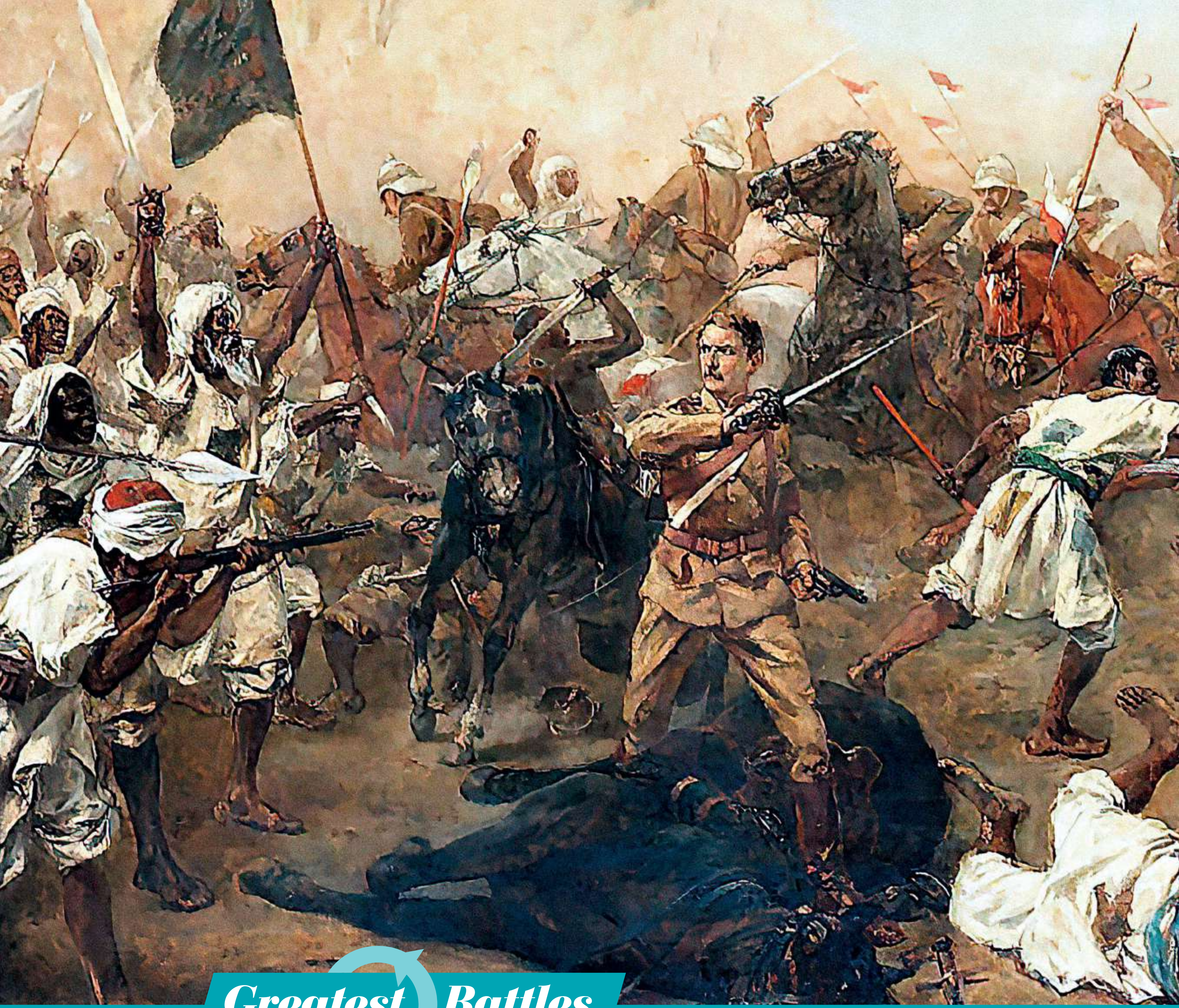
Can science tell if we are not superstitious or we just don't want to admit it?

Scientists and researchers have tried to get to the bottom of our superstitious beliefs, with some surprising results. In 2003, Professor Richard Wiseman of the Psychology Department of Hertfordshire University, in a survey of 2,068 people, found the levels of belief to be surprisingly high, even among those with a scientific background. Overall, 77 percent of respondents said they were a little or quite superstitious, with 42 percent saying they were very superstitious. From the survey results he and his team were able to rank the belief in specific superstitions as follows:

TOUCH WOOD	74%
FINGERS CROSSED	65%
AVOID LADDERS	50%
SMASHED MIRRORS	39%
LUCKY CHARMS	28%
NUMBER 13	26%

It was also clear from the survey that there were regional variations as to levels of belief for certain superstitions. In contrast to this, a 1996 Gallup Poll showed that only 25 percent of Americans regarded themselves as superstitious, and this figure dropped as people got older.

All images: © Getty Images



Greatest Battles

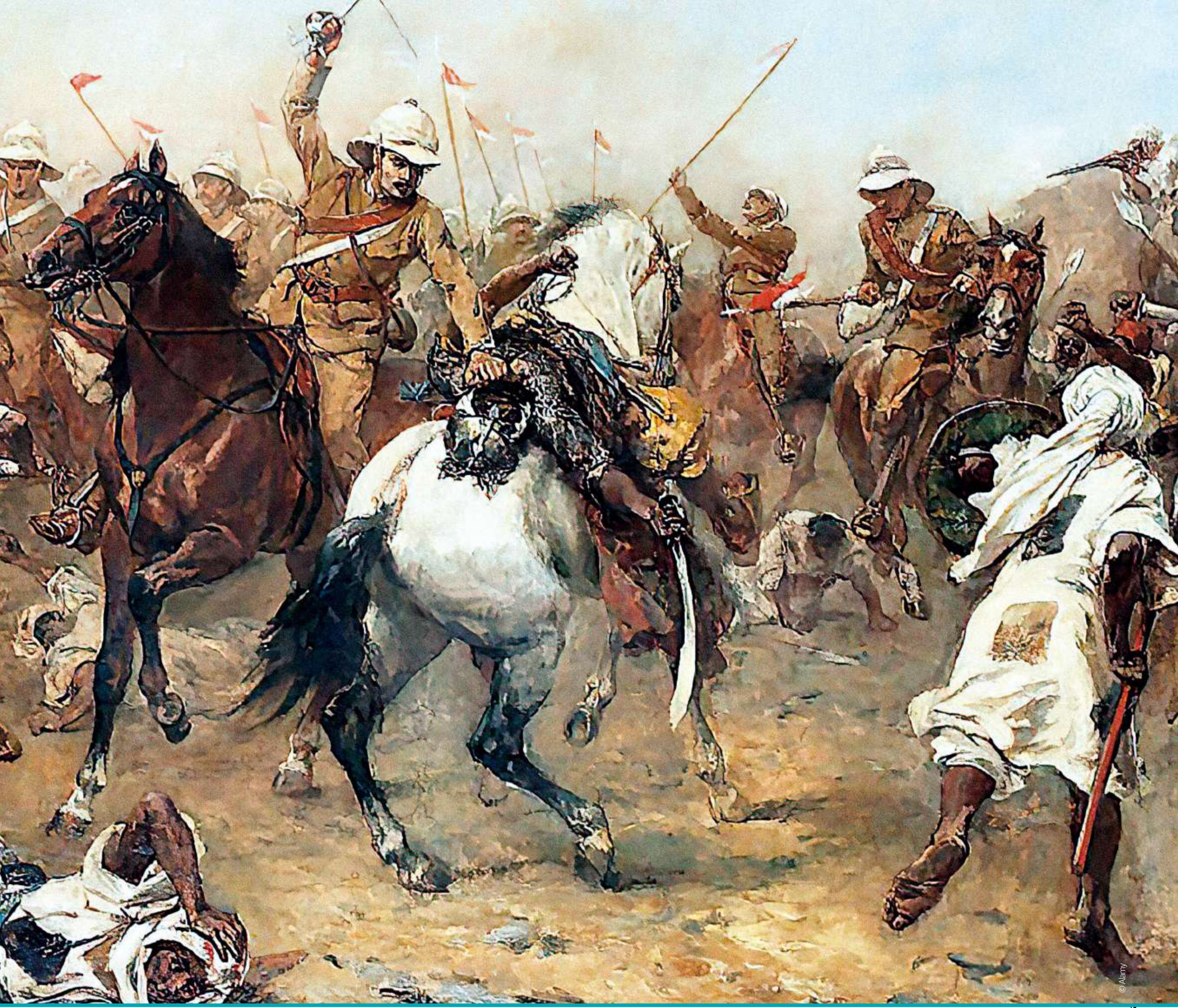
BATTLE OF OMDURMAN

OMDURMAN, SUDAN, 2 SEPTEMBER 1898

Written by Mark Simner

On 26 January 1885 Major-General Charles 'Chinese' Gordon was killed as the Sudanese city of Khartoum fell to the Mahdists. When news of his death, and the failed expedition sent to save him, reached Britain, a wave of anguish swept through the British public. Newspapers demanding vengeance for this slain 'Christian martyr' landed with a heavy thud on Victorian breakfast tables, but it was not to be. British forces withdrew and political issues nearer home slowly drew attention away from Gordon's demise. Over a decade would pass before Khartoum was retaken and the Mahdists destroyed.

Britain's involvement in Sudan had come in the wake of the 1882 invasion of Egypt. London had initially been reluctant to intervene militarily in Egypt but felt compelled to act following a



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nationalistic coup mounted by the Egyptian Army. Similarly, the British government had little desire to involve itself in the affairs of Sudan. Yet Sudan had been governed by Egypt since the early 19th century and Egypt's problems with its southern neighbour became Britain's problems by default.

The proposed solution came in the form of Gordon, whom Cairo believed was the man to evacuate Khartoum. Although welcomed by its inhabitants, Gordon became cut off in the city and surrounded by Mahdist forces. Reluctantly the British government authorised an expedition led by Garnet Wolseley to rescue him, but Wolseley failed to reach the city in time to save his friend.

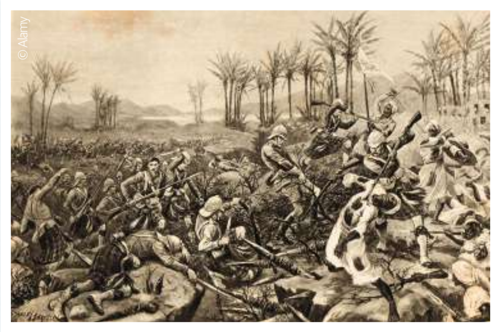
Shortly after Gordon's death, the Mahdi also died and was succeeded by Abdallāhi ibn Mohammed Al-Khalifa. The Khalifa, as he was known, consolidated the Mahdist regime and established a civil and military administration that encompassed many different peoples stretched over almost 2,500,000km². Abdallāhi would prove to be ruthless and able but lacked the charisma of his predecessor.

Life in the Mahdist state was harsh, but this was of little concern to Lord Salisbury, who had returned as British prime minister in June 1895. What was of concern was the disastrous defeat inflicted by the Abyssinians on an Italian Army in Ethiopia at the Battle of Adowa in March 1896. The Italian garrison at Kassala in eastern Sudan found itself vulnerable and the Mahdists prepared to attack. Rome pleaded with London to mount a military diversion, to which Salisbury agreed, albeit a limited campaign in the northern Sundanese province of Dongola.

CAMPAIGN IN SUDAN

Following their occupation of Egypt, the British reorganised and trained a new Egyptian Army. In 1896 the commander-in-chief of this force, known as the Sirdar, was Colonel (soon to be Major-General) Horatio Herbert Kitchener. For the coming Dongola campaign Kitchener would have available 9,000 Egyptian troops and 520 men of the North Staffordshire Regiment. Opposing him was a Mahdist force of 10,000 in Dongola, with around 3,000 at Firket.

By 20 March, an advanced base had been established at the village of Akasha, which was a short distance from Firket. Three battalions of Egyptian infantry were assembled at Akasha under Colonel Archibald Hunter. Meanwhile, Kitchener exerted his considerable organisational skills and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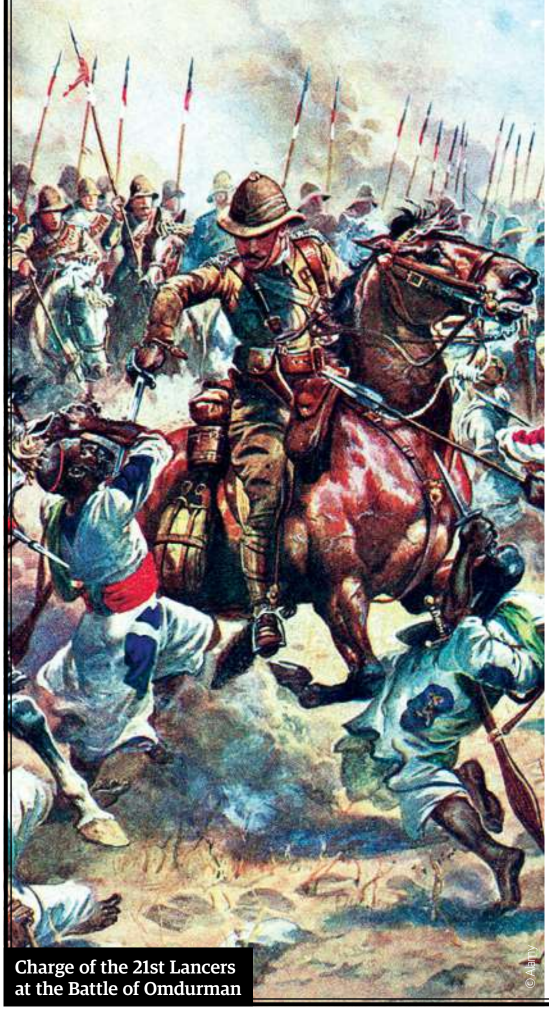
Men of the Cameron Highlanders assaulting the Mahdist camp during the Battle of Atbara, 8 April 1898

Image source: wiki/Imperial War Museums

Emir Ahmad Mahmud (left) being interrogated by Colonel Sir Francis Wingate following his capture at the Battle of Atbara


Charge of the 21st Lancers at the Battle of Omdurman

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ensured supplies were moved up. To assist in this challenging task the Sirdar restored the existing local railway and extended it, itself a formidable feat led by Lieutenant Percy Girouard, a Canadian-born railway builder.

For the assault on Firket, Kitchener divided his forces into a River Column and a Desert Column. The former was commanded by Hunter and the latter by Major John F Burn-Murdoch. The River Column moved south while the Desert Column swung out to the east before also heading south to the rear of Firket. In the early hours of 7 June, the two columns struck at the Mahdists, taking them completely by surprise. When fighting ended the Mahdists had suffered 800 killed and 600 taken prisoner. Anglo-Egyptian casualties stood at a mere 20 killed and just over 80 wounded.

After Firket, energies were focused on extending the railway while waiting for the Nile to rise to transport men, animals and supplies. There was a cholera outbreak, which took its toll on the troops and bad weather hampered work on the railway. Nevertheless, Kitchener's men entered Dongola unopposed on 23 September. Construction of the vital Sudan Military Railway continued apace.

On 29 July 1897, Hunter advanced on Abu Hamed, night-marching almost 200km in just seven days. On 7 August he ordered a preparatory bombardment followed by an assault. The 700-strong Mahdist garrison was destroyed while Hunter lost only 18 killed and just over 60 wounded.

It was at this point that a full reconquest of Sudan and destruction of the Mahdists was authorised. Kitchener was reinforced, receiving thousands of British troops. These included four infantry battalions: the Lincolnshires, Warwickshires, Cameron Highlanders and Seaforth Highlanders, which together formed 1st British Brigade. In total Kitchener had 10,000 British and Egyptian infantry, 500 cavalry, 5,000 mounted Baggara and 24 guns. His next target was on the Atbara River, where Mahdist forces under Ahmad Mahmud had encamped at Nakheila.

The Battle of Atbara took place on 8 April 1898 in what would be the second-largest action of the campaign. At 6.15am an artillery bombardment was unleashed on Mahmud, followed by an infantry assault and hand-to-hand fighting. The Mahdists were dealt a heavy defeat, this time losing 3,000 killed. However, Kitchener's casualties were also high, at over 560 killed or wounded.

Another pause in the fighting occurred while Fort Atbara was established as an advanced base and the railway further extended. Again, Kitchener had to wait for the Nile to rise for his gunboats to get over the Sixth Cataract. More reinforcements arrived, including battalions of the Grenadier Guards, Northumberland Fusiliers, Rifle Brigade and Lancashire Fusiliers, collectively forming 2nd British Brigade. More artillery, Maxim guns, and the 21st Lancers also joined. Kitchener now had over 25,000 men for his showdown with the Khalifa's forces at what would become known as the Battle of Omdurman.

PRELUDE TO BATTLE

By September Kitchener was ready to face the main Mahdist army. At his disposal he had the British Infantry Division under Major-General William Forbes Gatacre, which was made up of 1st Brigade (under Brigadier-General Andrew Gilbert Wauchope) and 2nd Brigade (under Brigadier-General Neville Lyttelton). The Egyptian Division was commanded by Major-General Archibald Hunter and consisted of four brigades: 1st Brigade (Brigadier-General Hector MacDonald); 2nd Brigade (Colonel John Grenfell Maxwell); 3rd Brigade (Colonel DF Lewis); and 4th Brigade (Lieutenant-Colonel John Collinson). In addition were the mounted troops, consisting of four British squadrons of the 21st Lancers, nine squadrons of Egyptian cavalry and eight companies of the Camel Corps. The Anglo-Egyptian artillery was commanded by Colonel Charles Long, while the naval contingent of ten gunboats came under Commodore Colin Keppel.

Commanding the Mahdist army was the Khalifa himself, who divided his force into the following divisions: the Dark Green Flag, the Black Flag, the Bright Green Flag and the Red Flag. Other Mahdist forces present included those commanded by Osman Digna and Osman Azrak. In total it is estimated the Khalifa fielded over 50,000 warriors during the battle.

Kitchener reviewed his army on 23 August at Wad Hamed. From here the Sirdar advanced in the direction of Omdurman, reaching a village called El Egeiga on the Nile on 1 September. Here, a mere 10km from Omdurman, the Anglo-Egyptian troops constructed a crescent-shaped defensive thorn zariba. The Sirdar was keen to avoid bloody street fighting in the city and instead hoped to lure the Mahdists into an attack.

A reconnaissance mission was mounted by the Egyptian cavalry while Keppel's gunboats moved up the Nile. At 11am the cavalry spotted in the distance a 6km-long line of Mahdist warriors advancing in their direction. They had found the main Mahdist army.

Meanwhile, Keppel's gunboats had been engaging Mahdist batteries on both banks of the Nile near Omdurman. Each was destroyed in turn before Keppel turned his guns on the walls of the city. A force of Arab irregulars under Major Stuart Wortley also advanced up the east bank of the river and assaulted several forts. Once these were cleared the gunboats landed a battery of howitzers under Major FB Elmslie, who commenced fire on the city. During this bombardment it is said the dome of the Mahdi's tomb was damaged by a lyddite shell.

Suddenly the cavalry, which had fallen back in face of a Mahdist attack, arrived back at the zariba and reported the Khalifa was about to launch an assault. Kitchener's men prepared themselves for the attack, but it did not come. The Mahdists had settled down for the night and the battle would have to wait until the following day.

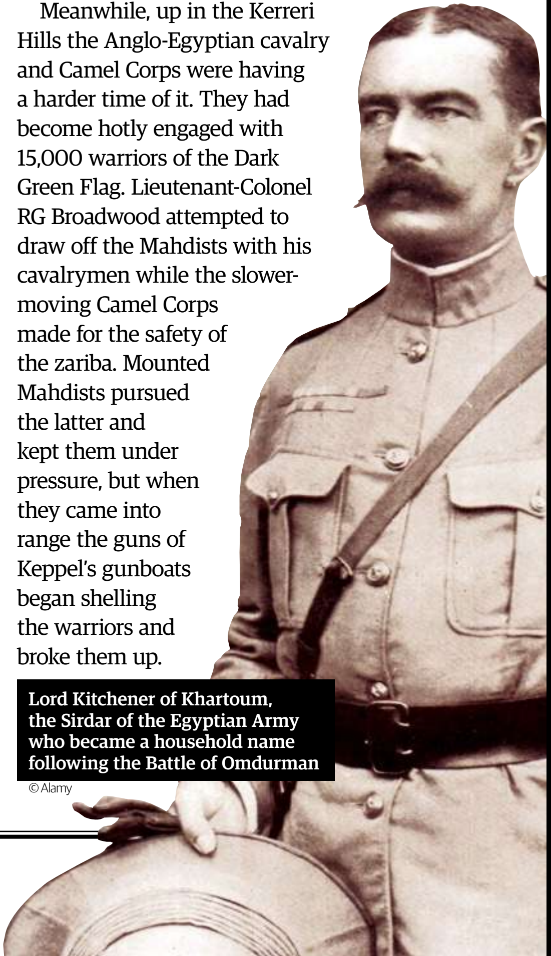
THE BATTLE OF OMDURMAN

As morning on 2 September broke, Kitchener ordered his men to stand-to. The cavalry had already departed the zariba, the 21st Lancers heading for the Jebel Surgham ridge, which they reached at 5.45am. Meanwhile the Egyptian cavalry, the Camel Corps, and the Horse Artillery made for the Kerreri Hills. Soon the lancers could see thousands of Mahdist warriors moving en mass towards Kitchener's zariba, in what must have been an awe-inspiring sight.

The Khalifa's plan was to send forward a wave of warriors under Osman Azrak and Ibrahim al Khalil and assault the front and left flank of Kitchener's line. If the attack was repulsed Azrak was tasked with conducting a withdrawal in such a way as to encourage the Anglo-Egyptian troops to give pursuit, drawing them out beyond the range of their gunboats, where another force in reserve would be ready to ambush them. Osman Digna was instructed to block the route to Omdurman.

Despite the shelling, the Khalifa's warriors pushed on but soon came under fire from the Maxims at 1,555m. At 1,370m the British infantry began pouring rifle volleys onto their attackers. By the time the Mahdists got within around 730m the combined artillery, machine gun and rifle fire was cutting swathes through the ranks of their warriors. By 8am the initial Mahdist attack was at an end. It had been a complete disaster - thousands had become casualties and none had managed to reach the zariba.

Meanwhile, up in the Kerreri Hills the Anglo-Egyptian cavalry and Camel Corps were having a harder time of it. They had become hotly engaged with 15,000 warriors of the Dark Green Flag. Lieutenant-Colonel RG Broadwood attempted to draw off the Mahdists with his cavalrymen while the slower-moving Camel Corps made for the safety of the zariba. Mounted Mahdists pursued the latter and kept them under pressure, but when they came into range the guns of Keppel's gunboats began shelling the warriors and broke them up.



Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army who became a household name following the Battle of Omdurman

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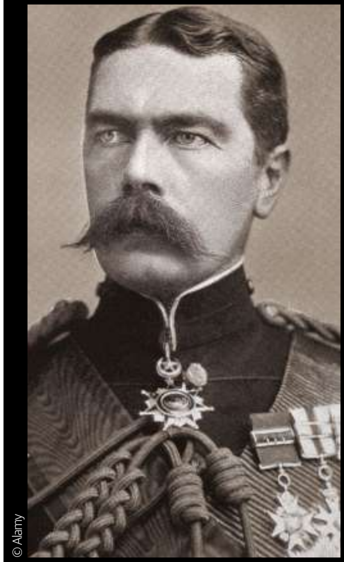
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN FORCES



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HERBERT KITCHENER

Serving in the military from 1871 to 1916, Kitchener is best known for his part in the Boer War and the early part of WWI. His victory at Omdurman was one of his earliest successes and earned him the title of Baron Kitchener of Khartoum. He was made secretary of state for war in 1914.

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HECTOR MACDONALD

Known as 'Fighting Mac', MacDonald joined the army at the age of 17 and rose from private to major general, doing so on merit alone and not a privileged education or background. After his success at Omdurman he fought in the Second Boer War and was knighted for his service in that conflict.

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WINSTON CHURCHILL

Among Kitchener's men for the Battle of Omdurman was a young Winston Churchill, who had secured his place among the 21st Lancers. He was also reporting on the war as a journalist for *The Morning Post*. He wrote a book about the campaign a year later called *The River War.*

MAHDIST (ANSAR) FORCES

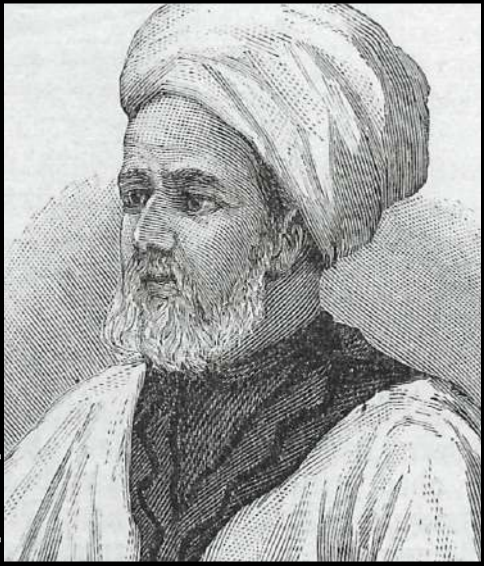
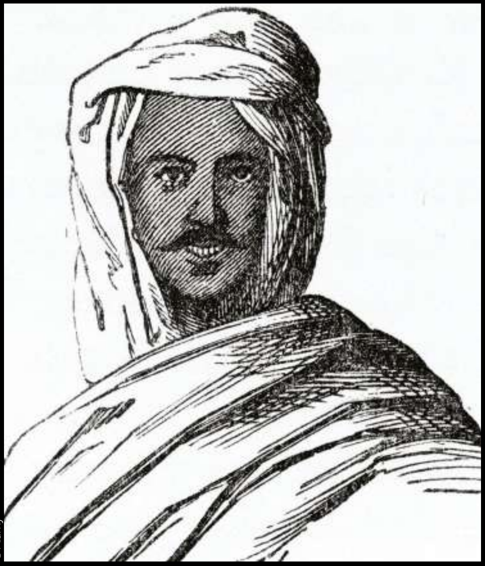


Image credit: wiki/Siegfried Weiß

ABDALLAHI IBN MUHAMMAD

Also known as 'The Khalifa', Abdallahi was a follower of Muhammad Ahmad, who had claimed to be the Mahdi, a messianic figure in Islam. After he died, Abdallahi took over leadership of the Mahdi movement, attempting to create a Islamic caliphate. He was unable to unite the people of Sudan and faced Britain's desire to reclaim the territory.



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OSMAN DIGNA

One of the top military commanders in the Mahdist movement, in Britain Osman was both demonised and respected by different echelons of society. Churchill called him "astute" and "prudent". Osman had been defeated by Kitchener in a preceding battle to Omdurman at the Atbara River, which proved an important turning point.

With the Mahdist army now seemingly in disorder, Kitchener ordered his troops to advance on the city of Omdurman itself. Ahead of the main force the 21st Lancers moved to clear the route to the city, but they were soon to experience disaster. Having been fired upon by what looked like several hundred Mahdists in a nearby khor (dry watercourse), Colonel Rowland Hill Martin ordered his regiment to charge. As the cavalrymen thundered their way to the khor it became evident that the lancers were in fact about to smash their way into a much stronger force of over 2,000 Mahdists who had been hidden in a depression.

Fierce close-quarter fighting ensued. Lances shattered on impact with their targets while men and horses crashed to the ground. Once through the mass of Mahdists a number of the surviving lancers managed to reform, draw their carbines and break up the enemy force with small arms fire. Of the 320 who charged, 21 lancers were killed and another 50 were wounded. The 21st also lost 119 horses killed or wounded. They had achieved little and become virtually combat ineffective. Nevertheless, three men of the regiment would subsequently receive the Victoria Cross for their bravery.

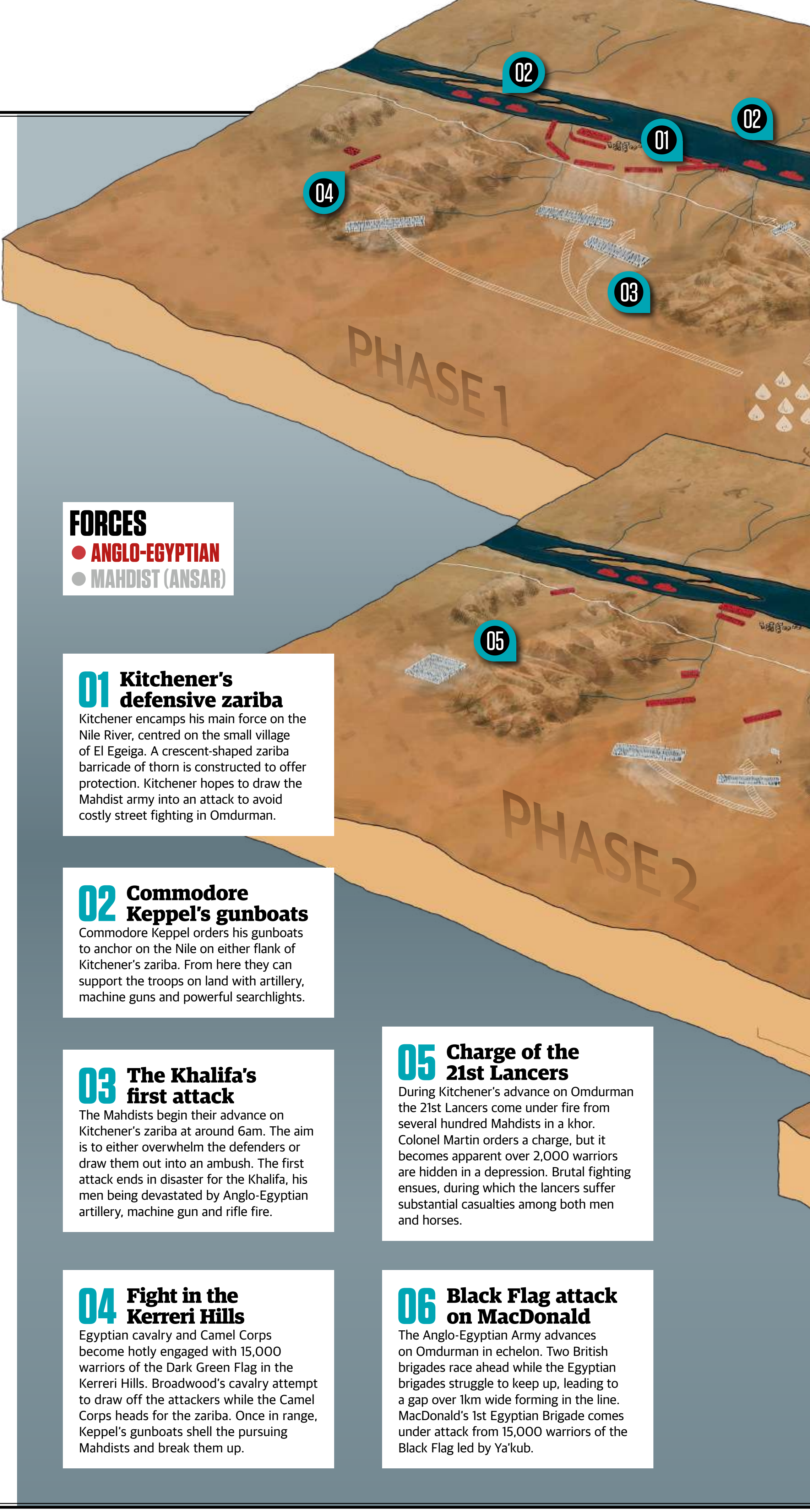
Meanwhile, Kitchener's advance on Omdurman was conducted in echelon with the two British brigades racing ahead on the left, both vying to be the first to reach the city. This competition to be first led to a 1.5km-wide gap developing in the line as the middle Egyptian brigades were unable to keep up. MacDonald's 1st Egyptian Brigade became exposed on its right flank, a vulnerability the Mahdists sought to exploit. The Black Flag attacked but MacDonald wheeled his infantrymen ready to receive them and, despite immense pressure, was able to maintain a steady fire on his attackers.

With the Black Flag dealt with, MacDonald coolly ordered his men to wheel 90 degrees to receive an oncoming attack by the Green Flags. Reinforcements in the form of the Lincolns appeared and the Green Flags were similarly destroyed.

At around 11.30am the battle came to an end. Kitchener pushed on for the city, which was entered via a gate on its eastern side as well as through several breaches previously made by the gunboats. The Khalifa, knowing he was defeated, ordered his men to make for the city and defend it. But few followed his orders, preferring to run off to save their lives. The Khalifa had little choice but to flee, making off on a donkey with a small escort.

AFTERMATH

The Battle of Omdurman ended with the loss 48 killed and 382 wounded for the Anglo-Egyptian force. Mahdist loses were estimated at almost 11,000 killed and around another 16,000 wounded, while 5,000 were taken prisoner. There would be controversy over the British handling of the Mahdist wounded and Kitchener's orders for the destruction of the Mahdi's tomb. Nevertheless, it was received as a great victory back home in Britain and made Kitchener a household name.



FORCES

● ANGLO-EGYPTIAN

● MAHDIST (ANSAR)

01 Kitchener's defensive zariba

Kitchener encamps his main force on the Nile River, centred on the small village of El Egeiga. A crescent-shaped zariba barricade of thorn is constructed to offer protection. Kitchener hopes to draw the Mahdist army into an attack to avoid costly street fighting in Omdurman.

02 Commodore Keppel's gunboats

Commodore Keppel orders his gunboats to anchor on the Nile on either flank of Kitchener's zariba. From here they can support the troops on land with artillery, machine guns and powerful searchlights.

03 The Khalifa's first attack

The Mahdists begin their advance on Kitchener's zariba at around 6am. The aim is to either overwhelm the defenders or draw them out into an ambush. The first attack ends in disaster for the Khalifa, his men being devastated by Anglo-Egyptian artillery, machine gun and rifle fire.

04 Fight in the Kerreri Hills

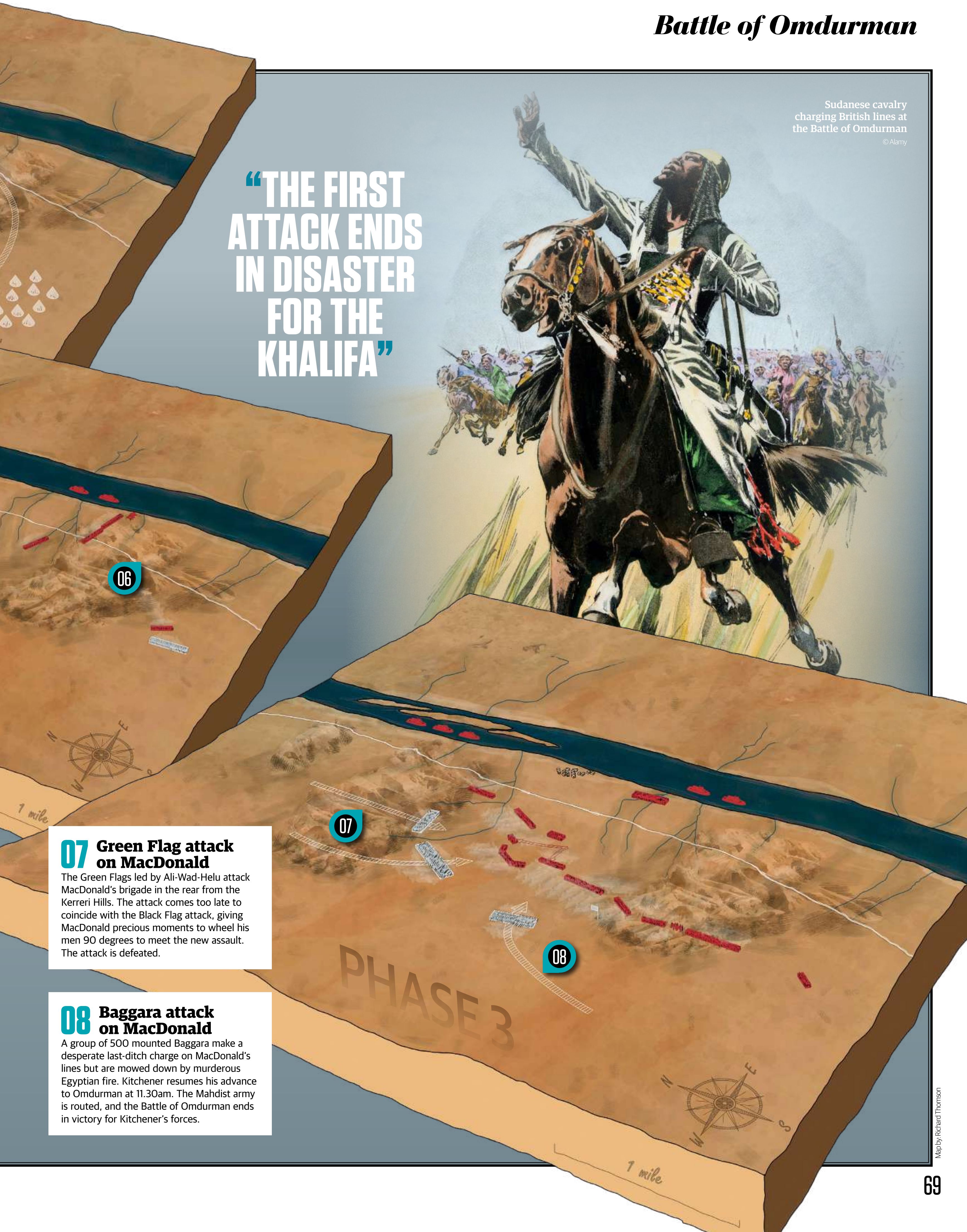
Egyptian cavalry and Camel Corps become hotly engaged with 15,000 warriors of the Dark Green Flag in the Kerreri Hills. Broadwood's cavalry attempt to draw off the attackers while the Camel Corps heads for the zariba. Once in range, Keppel's gunboats shell the pursuing Mahdists and break them up.

05 Charge of the 21st Lancers

During Kitchener's advance on Omdurman the 21st Lancers come under fire from several hundred Mahdists in a khor. Colonel Martin orders a charge, but it becomes apparent over 2,000 warriors are hidden in a depression. Brutal fighting ensues, during which the lancers suffer substantial casualties among both men and horses.

06 Black Flag attack on MacDonald

The Anglo-Egyptian Army advances on Omdurman in echelon. Two British brigades race ahead while the Egyptian brigades struggle to keep up, leading to a gap over 1km wide forming in the line. MacDonald's 1st Egyptian Brigade comes under attack from 15,000 warriors of the Black Flag led by Ya'kub.



> **“THE FIRST ATTACK ENDS IN DISASTER FOR THE KHALIFA”**

Sudanese cavalry charging British lines at the Battle of Omdurman

© Alamy

07 Green Flag attack on MacDonald

The Green Flags led by Ali-Wad-Helu attack MacDonald’s brigade in the rear from the Kerreri Hills. The attack comes too late to coincide with the Black Flag attack, giving MacDonald precious moments to wheel his men 90 degrees to meet the new assault. The attack is defeated.

08 Baggara attack on MacDonald

A group of 500 mounted Baggara make a desperate last-ditch charge on MacDonald’s lines but are mowed down by murderous Egyptian fire. Kitchener resumes his advance to Omdurman at 11.30am. The Mahdist army is routed, and the Battle of Omdurman ends in victory for Kitchener’s forces.

Map by: Richard Thomson

What If…

THE QING DYNASTY HAD REFORMED SOONER?

A clash of tradition and reform, plus the greed of global powers, threatened a dynasty's birth as a modern nation

Interview by David J Williamson

INTERVIEW WITH

© José Anton

LINDA JAIVIN

Linda is an essayist, translator, cultural commentator and the author of 12 books, including the acclaimed *The Shortest History of China*. She lives in Sydney, Australia.

By the 17th century the Ming Dynasty was desperate and weak. The Manchu peoples of the northeast were asked to help, but instead took their opportunity, captured the capital Beijing, and the Qing Dynasty was born. The country grew, along with stronger trade links with the Western powers. Chinese goods were all the rage, but European demands were ruthless, their response to resistance brutal, and the social and political cost was high. Internal strife and rival factions all but fractured the country, but could hundreds of years of Qing rule prevail?

To what extent was the appetite for Chinese goods in the West a curse for Chinese society and its rulers?
It was a terrible curse, but only because countries like Great Britain didn't want to pay for the tea, silk and porcelain they desired, especially if China wasn't going to buy anything from them in return. The Chinese had no hunger for the goods produced by the West, or as the Qianlong emperor told British envoy Lord Macartney in 1793: "I set no value on objects strange or ingenious and have no use for your country's manufactures."

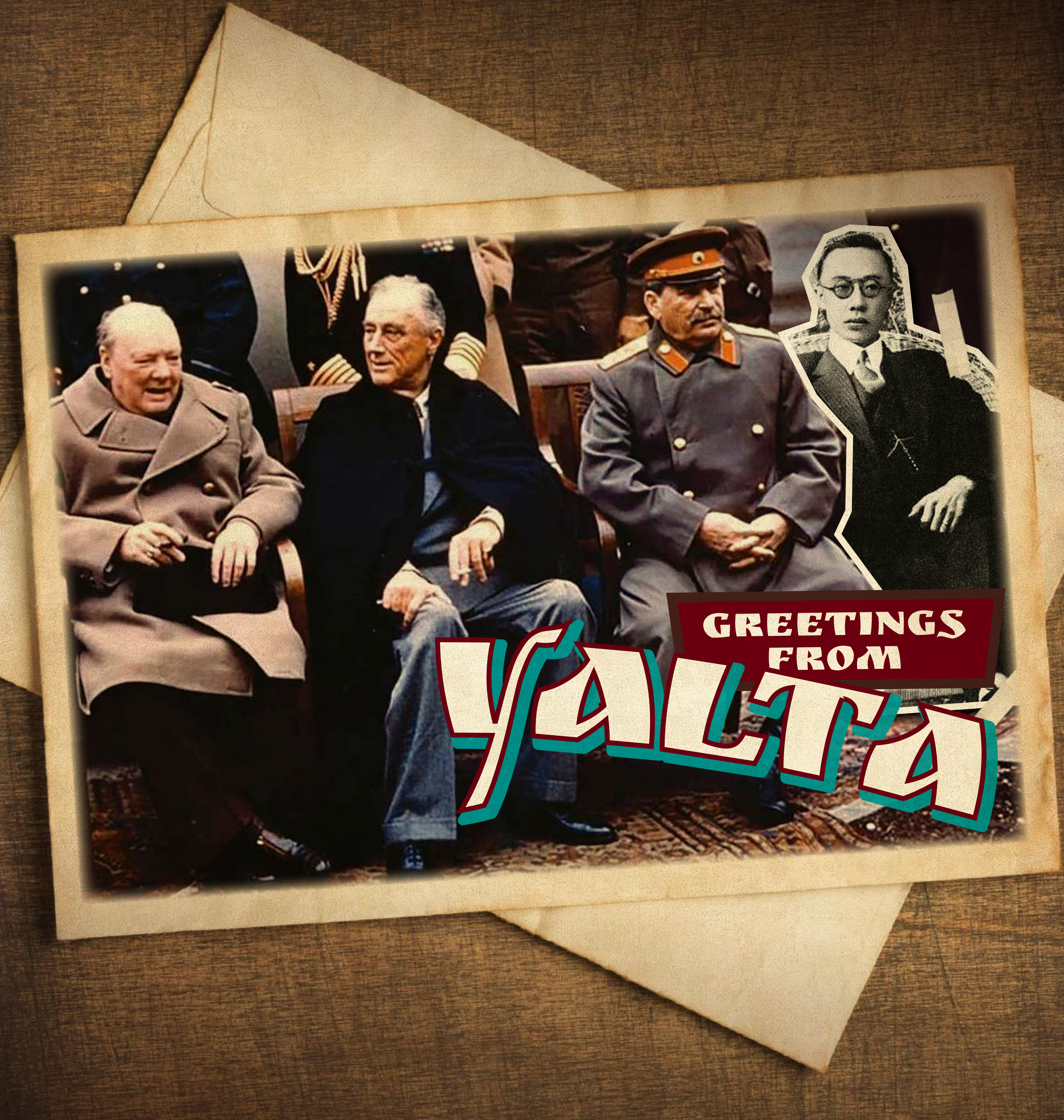
To correct the balance of trade, and ensure the silver wasn't just flowing in one direction, Great Britain came up with the appalling idea of selling opium produced from Indian poppies into China, against the will of the Qing court, fostering widespread addiction. When the Qing court banned the import of opium, closing their ports to British trade, British warships blasted them open again. The Opium Wars - the second of which involved France as well - resulted in the first of what the Chinese accurately term 'unequal treaties', a series of agreements forced upon the Qing by imperialist powers (including Japan) over the 19th and early 20th centuries. Among other things, the treaties allowed foreign powers to carve out semi-colonial possessions ('concessions') in port cities including Shanghai and awarded Hong Kong to Great Britain. The treaties humiliated the Qing, eroded Chinese sovereignty, crippled China's economy and created immense hardship for its people. They also helped to spark the reformist and revolutionary movements that brought not just the Qing, but some 2,000 years of dynastic history, to an end.

Did the influence and military dominance of the West, especially Britain, in the Opium Wars and the Boxer Uprising only serve to keep China how the West wanted it to be?
To the extent that the Western powers wanted China to be weak and acquiescent to their demands, the answer would have to be yes, for a time. All the imperialist powers, which by the late 19th century included Japan, saw China primarily in terms of how it could best

© Alamy

RIGHT The Forbidden City, Beijing, is a monument to the cold isolation of dynastic rule

Main image sources: © Alamy, © Getty Images


GREETINGS FROM
YALTA

THE PAST

1644

GROWING PAINS

With the dawn of the Qing dynasty came the expansion of territory, and the move towards more singular traditions and even language. China was not yet a single nation in the modern sense, but the Qing smartly kept some Ming officials while also seeking to influence all its many component regions in their own ways and customs. It was a rocky road, with conflict between those pushing for modern reform and those clutching to past traditions and cultural identity almost continually at odds with each other, leaving the people unsettled and their future uncertain.

1839-99

AN ADDICTIVE TRADE AND BLOODY UPRISING

During the Victorian era Great Britain had become fascinated with all things Chinese. Tea and porcelain was much sought after but there was no balance of trade and the British wanted a return. The brutal solution – flood China with opium from India to create addicts who would pay well to feed their habit. The two Opium Wars against Britain showed China's military weakness and total western dominance. The Boxer Uprising of 1899 was a bloody backlash against all foreigners, but it did not stop those same foreign powers continuing to dominate Chinese trade, politics and society.

1898

TOO LITTLE TOO LATE

The Qing Dynasty had its best and final chance at reform in 1898. The young Emperor Guangxu, finally ruling in his own right, endorsed several reforms for modernising China's industry, agriculture, military and governance. Unfortunately, a suspicious Dowager Empress Cixi put Guangxu under effective palace arrest, retook the regency and had the reformists who failed to flee beheaded, ending what is now known as the 100 Day Reforms. Such royal brutality shows just how distanced the ruling class were from the reality of the modern world, the needs of their people, and the harm it would eventually cause in changing the path of the country forever.

serve their needs, whether that be for natural resources, products or goods, or expanding spheres of influence. Yet for all the bullying, and the firepower behind it, the West could not possibly mould China – a large and populous country with an ancient and materially, aesthetically and intellectually sophisticated civilisation – to its own needs.

But just as 'China' was never a homogenous mass available for shaping by external powers, neither was the 'West' united in its views on China. Voltaire, for example, believed that the strength of traditional Chinese moral philosophy brought Christianity's claim on being the ultimate interpreter of morality into question. He (somewhat romantically) admired Confucius and considered that Western governments could learn quite a lot from the philosopher princes he imagined the emperors to be.

Did China under the Qing have a crisis of identity and of purpose? If so, how much more difficult was reform because of it?

China under the Qing experienced multiple crises, including some that preceded Western interference in its affairs. In the 18th century, the Qianlong emperor greatly expanded the borders of his realm. He conquered, for example, the large north-western territory and Uyghur homeland that he called Xinjiang, 'new frontier', incorporating it and Tibet into the empire. But these areas remained restive: Xinjiang had to be re-conquered in the 19th century following a series of rebellions. A bigger country demanded a bigger public service, too, but the bureaucracy did not grow in proportion to the population, which had reached some 300 million by the late 18th century. There were pressures on the food supply and a no-longer fit-for-service taxation regime, but without enough public servants the Qing was unable to keep on top of the increasingly complex problems of its population and soon faced multiple rebellions, some widespread and violent.

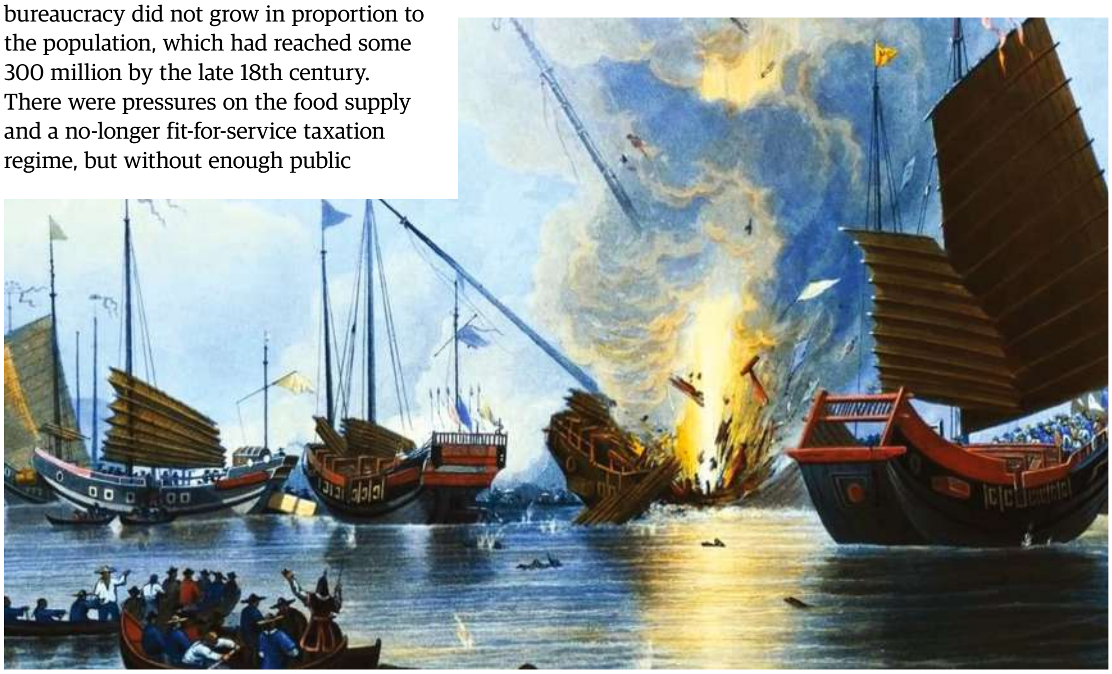
It was the crises themselves, including those brought on by Western aggression, that brought about demand for reform. By the 1860s they had the example of Meiji Restoration Japan, which despite having a similar culture and an emperor, had remade itself into a strong and modern state. Thinkers began to question what it would take to do the same for China.

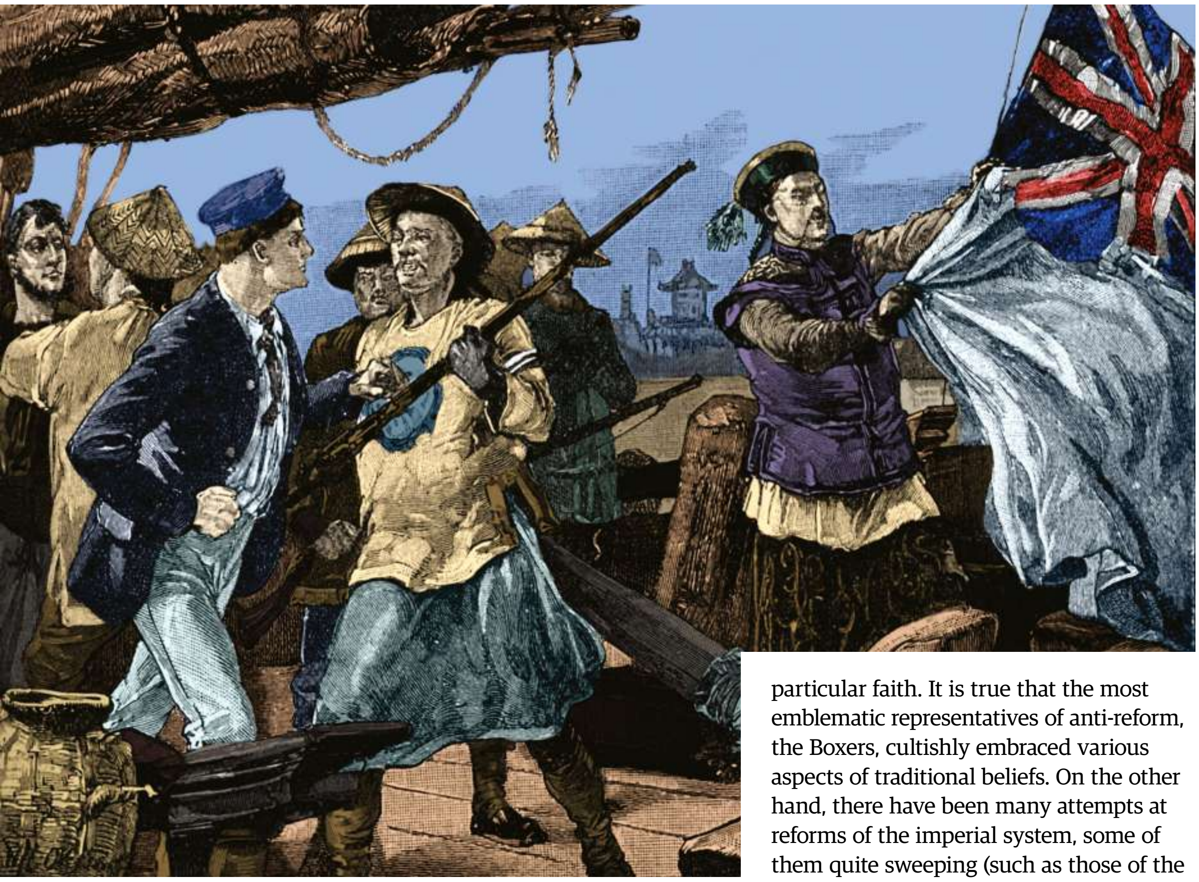
Did royal isolation, poor political judgement and reputation of its Qing rulers, the rule of Empress Cixi, and a weak military mean the Qing's fate was inevitable?

The early Qing emperors Kangxi (r.1661-1722) and Qianlong (r.1735-96) each made six inspection tours of the realm, checking on irrigation and flood control and other aspects of national life and economy. But the traditional system of dynastic governance, resting on a tiered, nationwide public service that reported back to the court theoretically already kept emperors in touch with what was going on. Historians tend to hold the early Qing emperors in high regard, and Qianlong is said to have presided over a shengshi, 'golden age'.

The Empress Dowager Cixi was a complex and intelligent woman who certainly had her flaws, but she can't be blamed for everything that went wrong in the late Qing. By the time she assumed the role of co-regent for the first of two young imperial heirs in 1861, the Qing was already in decline and crisis, faced

BELOW
Chinese war junks were no match for the might of the British Navy





ABOVE
Foreign powers were feared but came to be resented and hated

BELOW
The Empress Dowager Cixi was the ruthless power behind the throne

with unprecedented foreign aggression on the one hand and the massive and violent Taiping Rebellion (one of several at the time) on the other. It's unclear how anyone unable to directly command the court could've managed much better than she did, at least in the years leading to her nephew's majority. Blaming Cixi for everything that went wrong is almost a misogynistic sport in China, but it's a perspective that Chinese historians have increasingly come to question. If anything made the Qing's fall inevitable, it was the pressures inflicted on it by Great Britain and other imperialist powers.

Did the influence of religion and belief create a barrier to reforms? What could have been done?

Qing-era reformers may have despaired of the superstitious and fatalistic aspects of popular practices of Buddhism and Daoism. Many openly detested the conservative influence on society and politics of state Confucianism, with its stress on moderation in all things, hierarchies of authority, and propriety. But it's probably more relevant to say that the full weight of 2,000 years of dynastic rule, added to the deeply embedded fear of division, chaos and violence in the absence of autocratic control, was far more of an impediment to reform than any particular faith. It is true that the most emblematic representatives of anti-reform, the Boxers, cultishly embraced various aspects of traditional beliefs. On the other hand, there have been many attempts at reforms of the imperial system, some of them quite sweeping (such as those of the Song dynasty visionary Wang Anshi) and some initiated by emperors themselves (such as the first Ming emperor's decision to deny education to eunuchs in order to mitigate against their ability to interfere with political affairs – later overturned by a successor, leading to much eunuch-led trouble).

Would reforms only be at the consent of the West? What would be allowed and what would they look like?

The imperialist powers controlled the concessions, managed the collection of customs duties for the Qing, but didn't have a say in how the court ruled. Western powers weren't particularly supportive of Chinese reformists, either, given that they were all about strengthening the country, including its military defences against the West. When revolution came in 1911, the Qing had already begun the process of reform. It had appointed a National Assembly and was planning a transition to constitutional monarchy by 1917. Too little too late, of course. That said, the philosophies of the European Enlightenment, democratic systems, and practical modern ideas around such things as the virtues of physical education and sport, the liberation of women, and even policing, were a great inspiration to many Chinese reformers and revolutionaries as well.

THE POSSIBILITY

19TH CENTURY

NOT THE LAST EMPEROR

Had reform happened sooner then a more stable government, along with a population that was benefitting from real change, could have made all the difference to the Qing future. By modernising towards a constitutional monarchy and removing the cold distance between rulers and ruled, even perhaps placing more power in the hands of the people democratically, the decades of constant turmoil and unrest may have subsided. The voices of dissent and the propaganda machine for revolutionary change may not have succeeded.

19TH & 20TH CENTURIES

RESPECT FROM THE NEIGHBOURS

If reform of the military had been sustained and complete and a true regional power created, then the balance of power in the region may have been very different. No longer pushed around by the West and the Japanese, a militarily strong China would have had a true voice and influence. This would bring the stability to modernise effectively. With Japan having such a strong neighbour it may have thought differently about its own ambitions. Trade deals between China and the USA could have formed an uncomfortable alliance which may have made Japan think again before launching its audacious actions of WWII.

1911-49

NO LITTLE RED BOOK

With the country stronger both socially and militarily, the seeds of republicanism that grew in the years prior to the fall of the Qing dynasty may have been weaker. The Republican revolution of 1911-12 may never have happened. China may have continued to modernise with the signing of new and fairer treaties with world powers as the country took its place in the expanding global economy. Improved conditions for its people may have prevented communism taking root and there would've been no revolution of 1949, no Chairman Mao and no Little Red Book.

All images: © Alamy

Through History

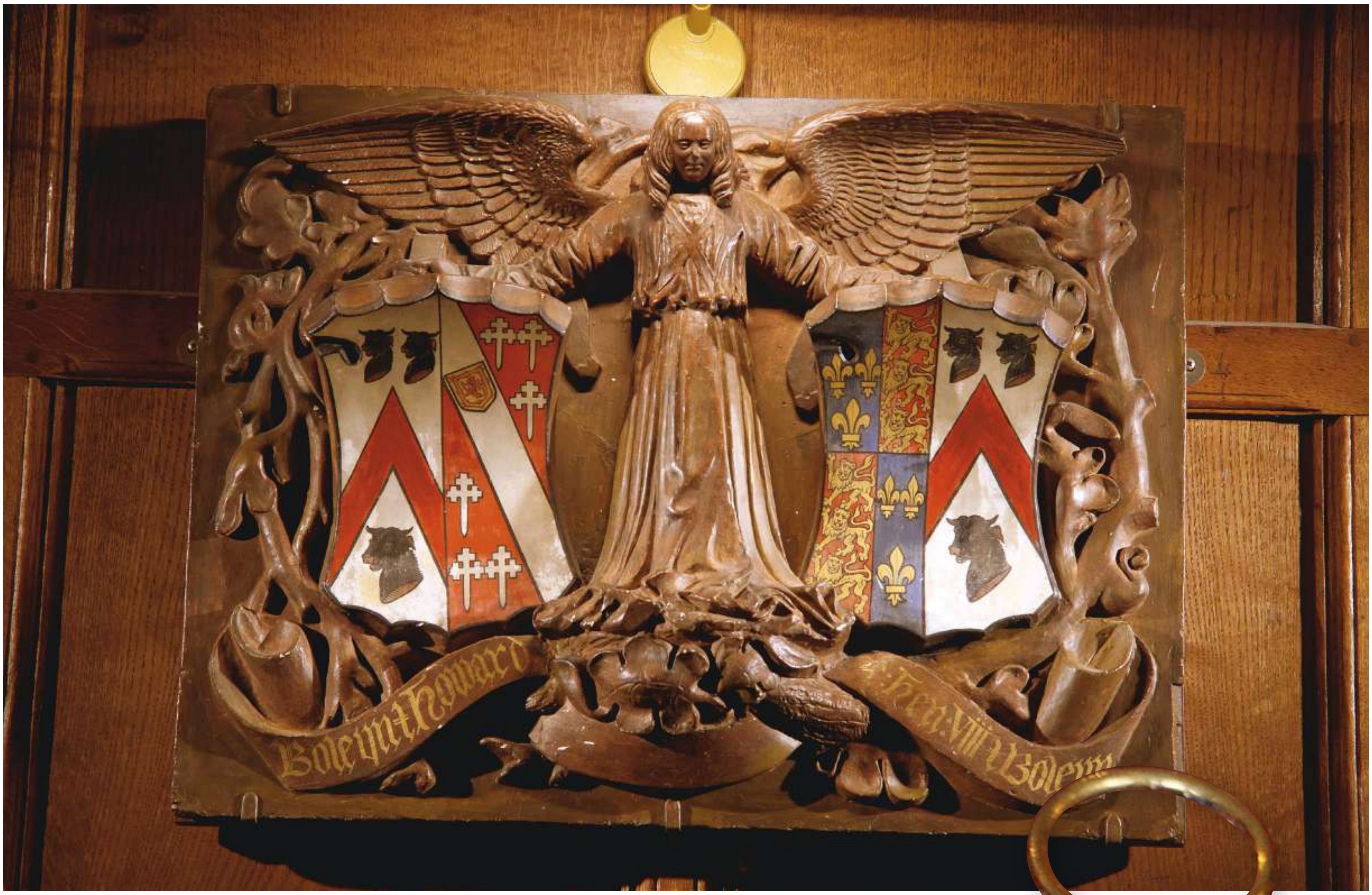
AT HOME WITH THE BOLEYNS

An exhibition at Hever Castle explores the life of the young Anne Boleyn 500 years after she first appeared at the court of Henry VIII

All images courtesy of: Hever Castle & Gardens

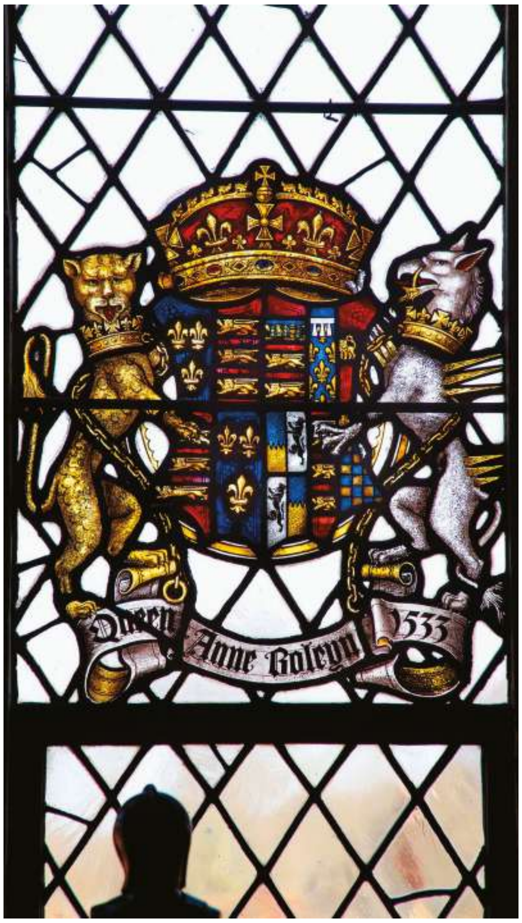
Anne Boleyn (c.1501 – 1536), the second wife of Henry VIII, is unlikely to ever be forgotten by history. Her infamous marriage saw her accused of witchcraft and adultery after she fell victim to Henry's fearsome temper. Her life was ended swiftly by a French swordsman, hired by the king to make the queen's death as quick as possible. Her life has become the subject of countless books, films and television series and, of all Henry VIII's wives, she is probably the most recognisable.

A new exhibition at Hever Castle in Kent, Boleyn's childhood home, aims to educate the public about her life before she entered the Tudor court. As the child of Thomas Boleyn and Lady Elizabeth Howard, she was born into a prominent family and raised alongside her sister, Mary, being educated at Hever and later in the Netherlands and France. The exhibition will allow visitors to walk in Anne's footsteps and view paintings, letters and artefacts which tell the story of her early life. Visitors will also be able to attend lectures and buy an accompanying exhibition guide. The exhibition is open now and runs until 9 November 2022 – see hevercastle.co.uk for more details.



MARRIAGE PLAQUE

▲ The marriage plaque at Hever Castle commemorates the unions of both Anne to Henry VIII and of Thomas Boleyn to Lady Elizabeth Howard. The wooden plaque features the coats of arms of each individual with their names written beneath.

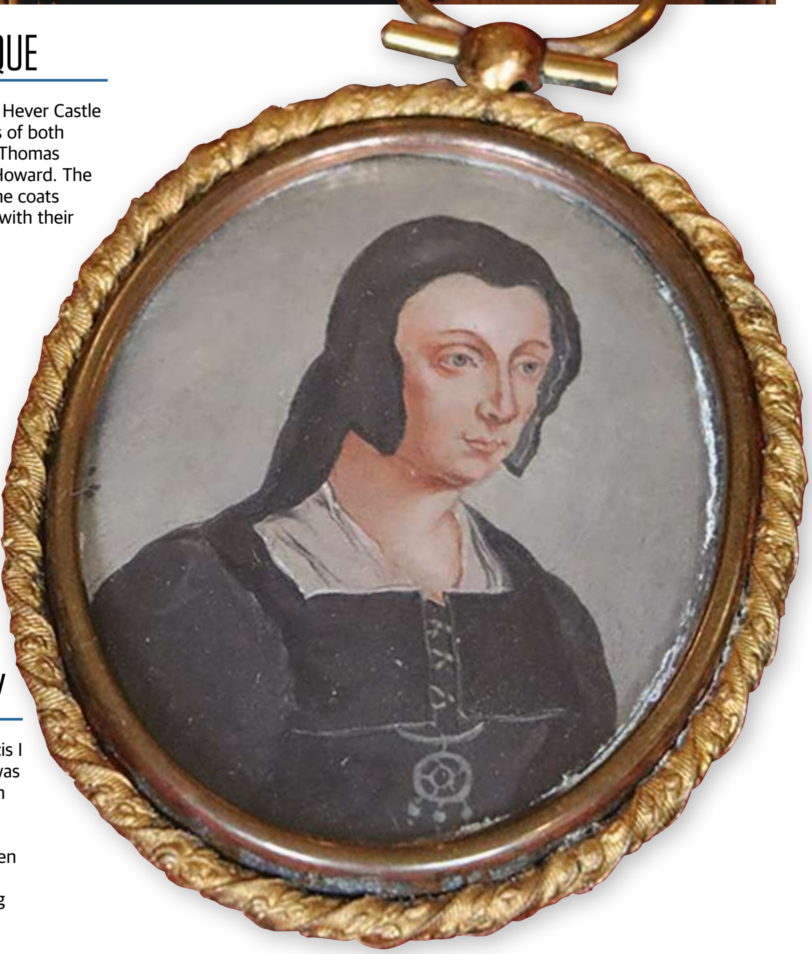


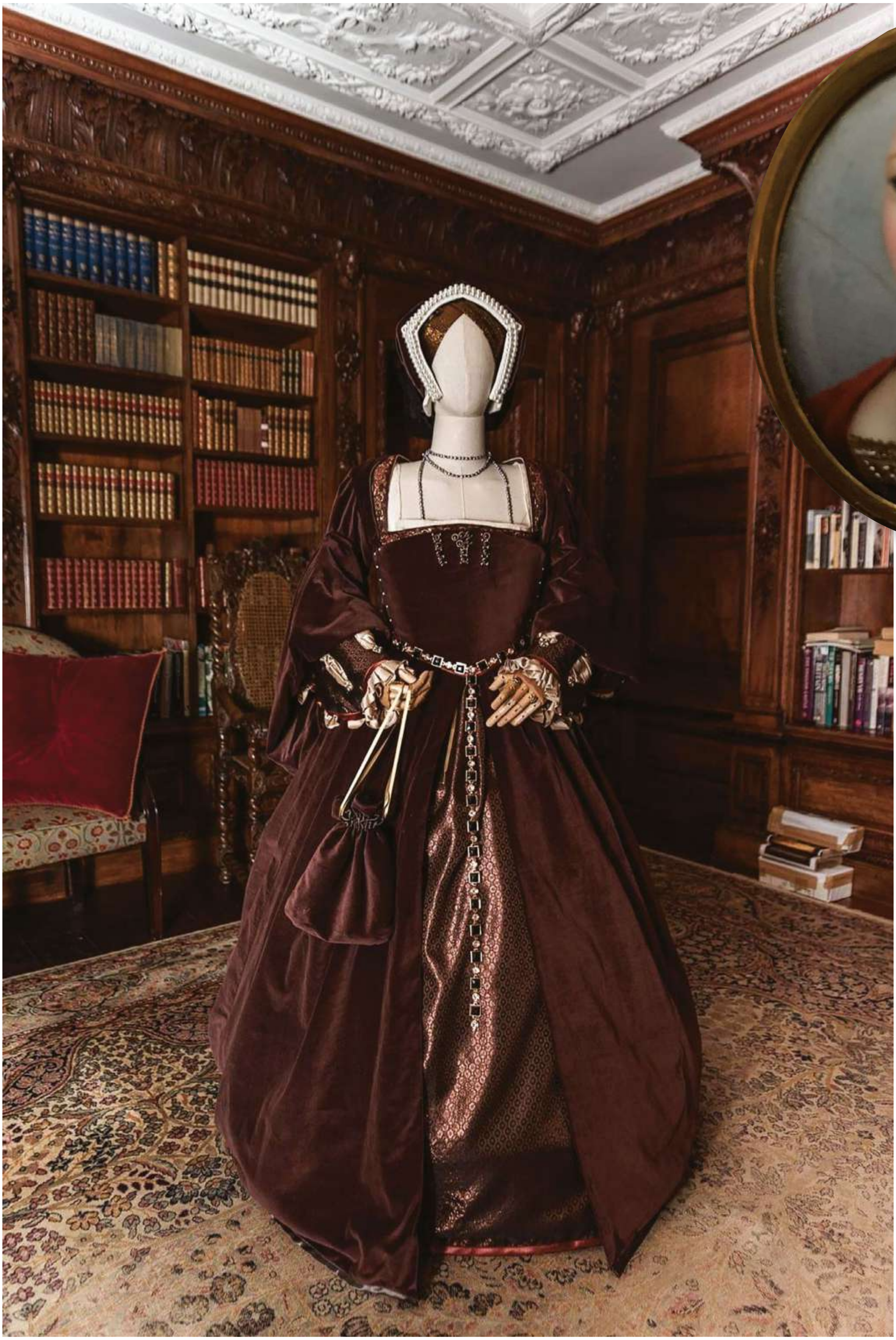
ROYAL COAT OF ARMS

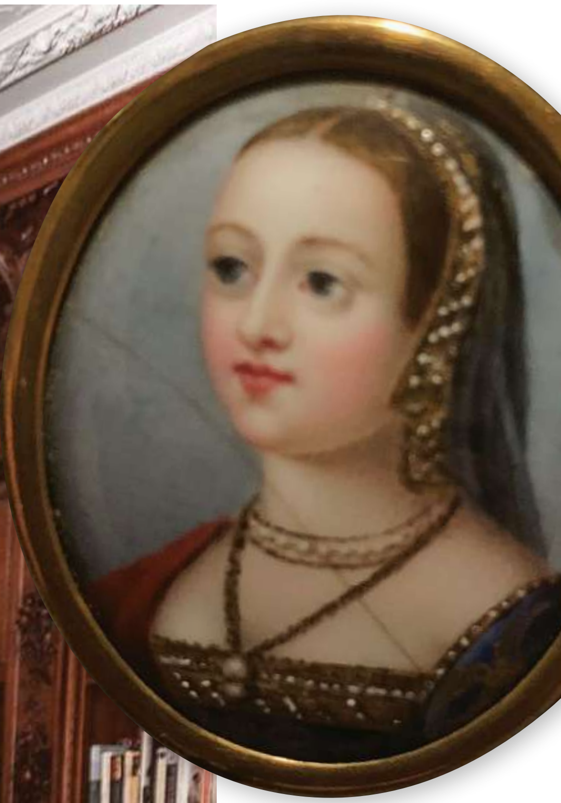
◀ Depicted in stained glass in the windows of Hever's Long Gallery, Anne's royal coat of arms incorporated heraldry from the Howard side of her family. A later addition to Hever, this coat of arms was designed by Clayton and Bell around 1903-08.

LOUISE OF SAVOY

▶ The mother of King Francis I of France, Louise of Savoy was a politically powerful woman who acted as regent for her son on several occasions. Anne is believed to have been inspired during her time in France by Louise's exercising of female authority.







QUEEN CLAUDE

▲ Anne spent seven years at the court of Queen Claude of France. There are suggestions that Anne was chosen to stay in the train of the 15-year-old Claude because of their similarity in age, and that the two had become friends.

DRESS TO IMPRESS

◀ Having been partly educated in the European courts of France and the Netherlands, when Anne returned to England she brought the fashions with her. This recreation shows the types of clothes she would have worn at court.

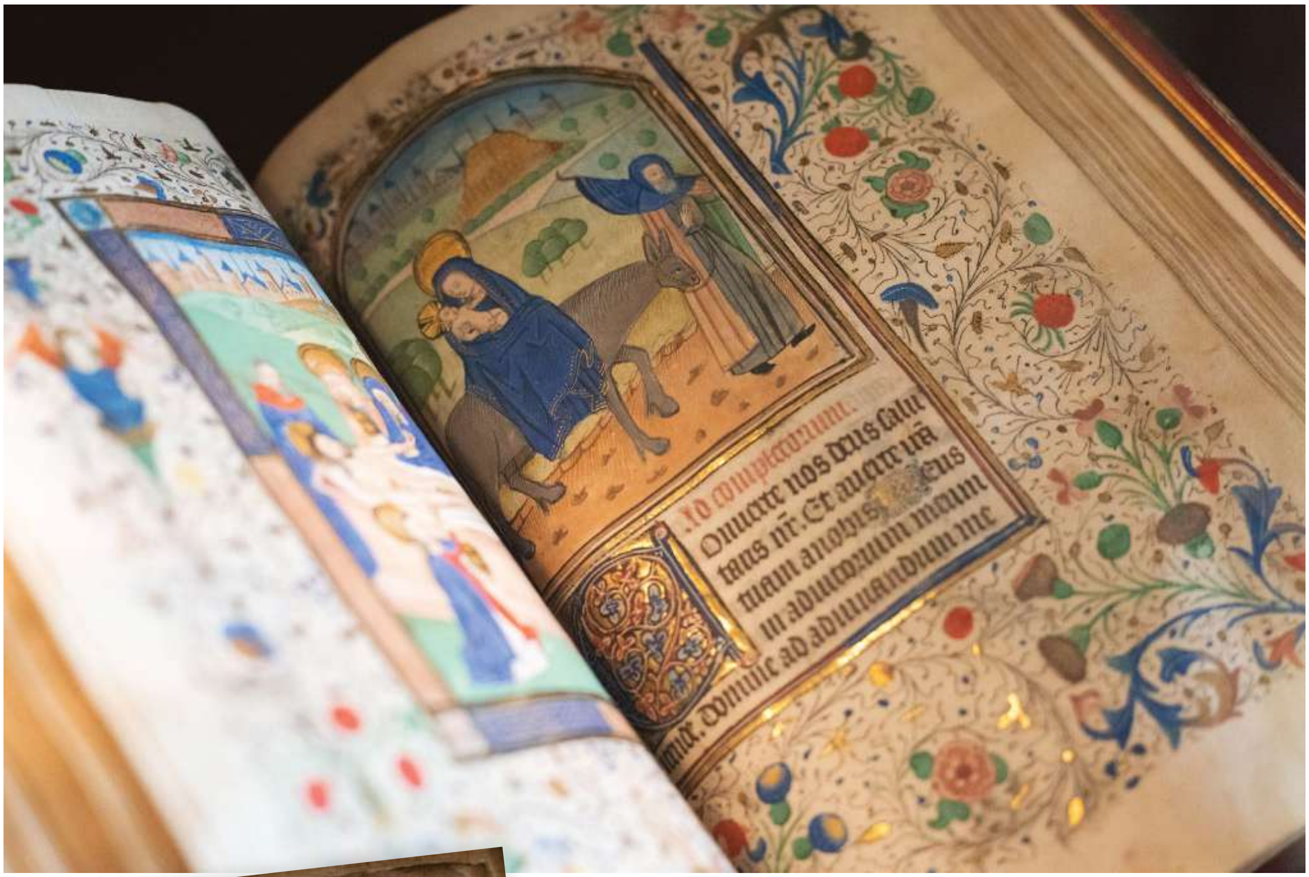
© Alun Rees of AR Photography

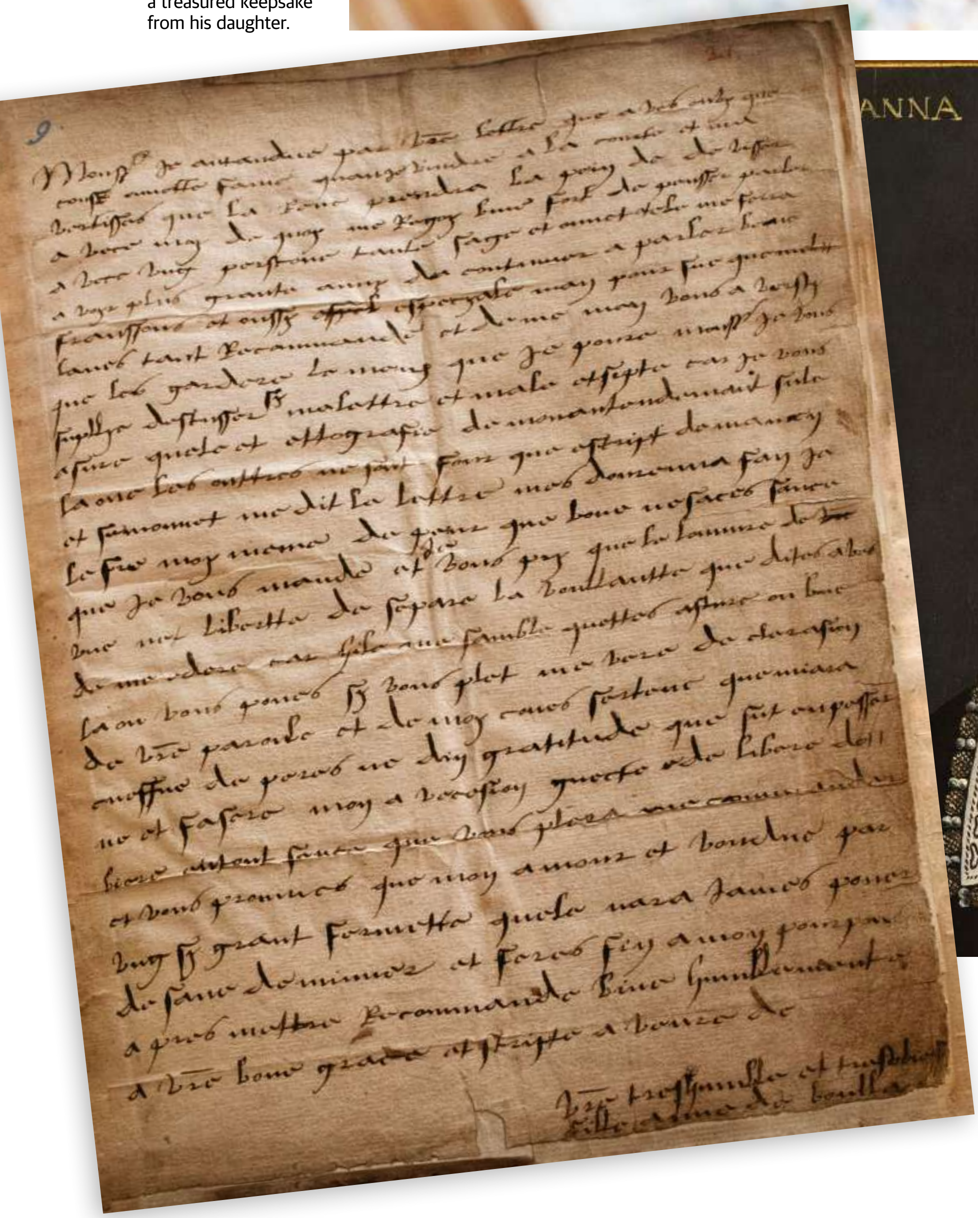
BOOK OF HOURS

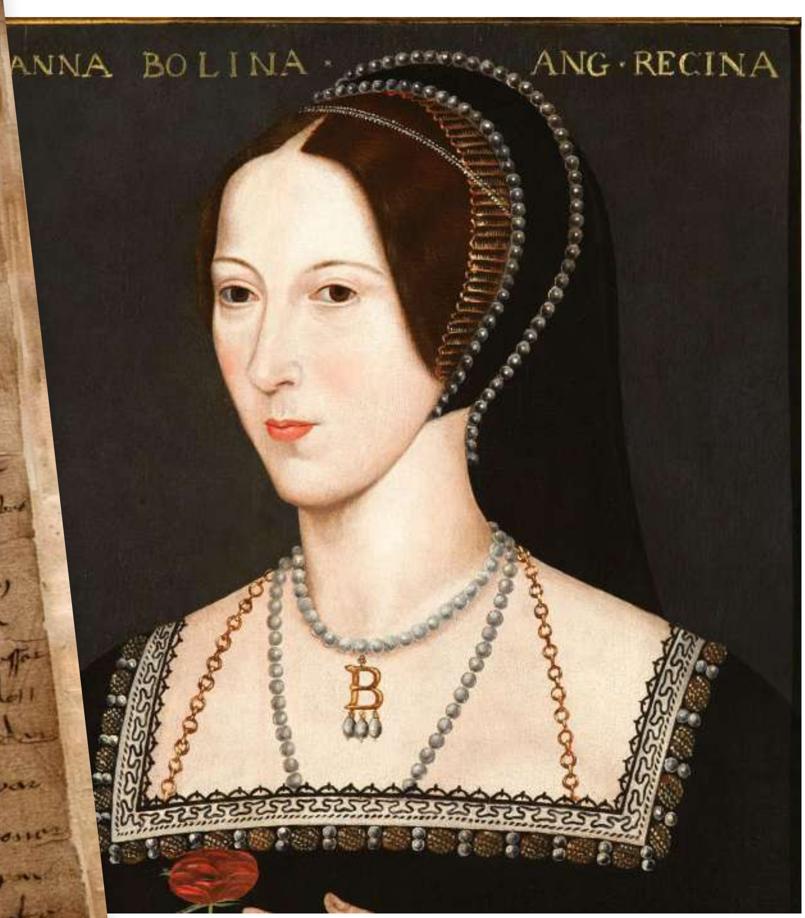
▶ Of the personal belongings of Anne's at Hever, her Books of Hours would have been frequently used for her religious studies. Recent research indicates that the latter of the two books may have been bought and decorated specifically for Anne.

A LETTER FROM ANNE

▼ Writing to her father, Thomas, from the Low Countries in around 1514, this letter allows us to see Anne's very own words. Written in French, the survival of the letter suggests that Thomas kept it as a treasured keepsake from his daughter.







PORTRAIT OF A QUEEN

▲ This depiction of Anne is instantly recognisable. Painted by an unknown artist in about 1550, during the reign of her daughter Elizabeth I, the portrait shows Anne wearing her signature "B" necklace and holding a red rose.

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

COLIN FIRTH MATTHEW MACFADYEN KELLY MACDONALD PENELOPE WILTON JOHNNY FLYNN AND JASON ISAACS
BASED ON THE EXTRAORDINARY TRUE STORY
OPERATION MINCEMEAT
DECEPTION. THE GREATEST WEAPON IN WAR.
IN CINEMAS JANUARY 2022

2x © Alamy

OPERATION MINCEMEAT

A tonally inconsistent retelling of how Britain tried to use a corpse to fool the Nazis

Certificate: 12A **Director:** John Madden **Cast:** Colin Firth, Matthew Macfadyen, Kelly Macdonald **Released:** Out now

'Safe' is a word that best describes the World War II spy-drama *Operation Mincemeat*. As British cinemas return to a sense of normality following the lockdowns initiated by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are already beginning to see the regular collection of superhero epics, romantic comedies and animated children's films that usually fill the screens of multiplexes across the country. Among the current spate of releases is *Operation Mincemeat*, which comfortably fits into the well-loved category of the 'British WWII star-studded drama'. Typical of its genre, the resultant film is a decidedly ordinary affair that offers little new despite being based on one of the conflict's more colourful tales of espionage and intrigue.

The real operation utilised the corpse of homeless man Glyndwr Michael and disguised him as a fictional British officer in order to convince Nazi Germany that Britain was planning to invade Greece and Sardinia instead of Sicily. Michelle Ashford's screenplay, based on Ben Macintyre's book, follows these events fairly simplistically. *Operation Mincemeat*'s key problem is one of tone – the film doesn't seem to know exactly what it wants to be. In some moments it approaches Michael with poignancy and care, in others it revels in macabre comedy – sometimes clumsily following one with the other. At other times the film focuses on romantic melodrama, before remembering it is in fact a movie about espionage and moving swiftly on.

Instead of concentrating on one of these areas the film appears content to accept its lot as a routine 'drama based on true events'. All the usual cliches of a modern British WWII film are here. Churchill is present, though he needn't be, adding little to nothing to an already muddled film. Historical cameos are highlighted in an over the top manner, with Ian Fleming appearing only to utter the occasional James Bond reference and provide an excuse for the flamboyant narration. Characters talk continuously of the war and seemingly nothing else, existing as cyphers for large chunks of exposition. Finally, Admiral John Henry Godfrey is turned into the semi-villain of the film, making sure our heroes can be portrayed as 'underdogs' - a cliche popular in contemporary historical dramas.

In most other respects the film is exceedingly well put together. John Madden's direction is inventive and engaging, while Thomas Newman's excellent score is just what you'd expect from a composer of his calibre. Where the film shines in particular, however, is its cast. Colin Firth delivers as always but it is the performances of Matthew Macfayden as Charles Cholmondeley and Penelope Wilton as Hester Leggett that really stand out. Wilton in particular effortlessly brings both pathos and a sense of class to some of the more exposition-heavy lines, while Macfayden develops a character that feels rounded and fully sympathetic, if not always likeable.

Operation Mincemeat is an unfortunately by-the-numbers World War II drama, mainly hampered by a script that suffers from a lack of inventiveness and focus. However, for those who enjoy this type of film it is a routine but not unenjoyable affair. While it may not break any new ground, its relative safety and sense of familiarity see it destined to become a streaming favourite for viewing on a particularly lazy Sunday afternoon. ***CM***

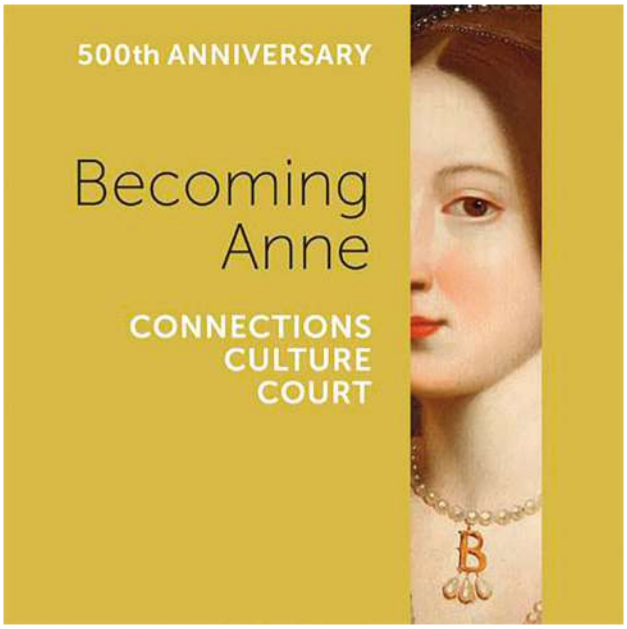
★★☆☆☆

Reviews by
Callum McKelvie, Emily Staniforth, Jonathan Gordon

BECOMING ANNE

The tie-in book to Hever Castle's major new exhibition explores the early years of the most famous of Henry VIII's wives

Authors: Dr Owen Emmerson and Kate McCaffrey **Price:** £10

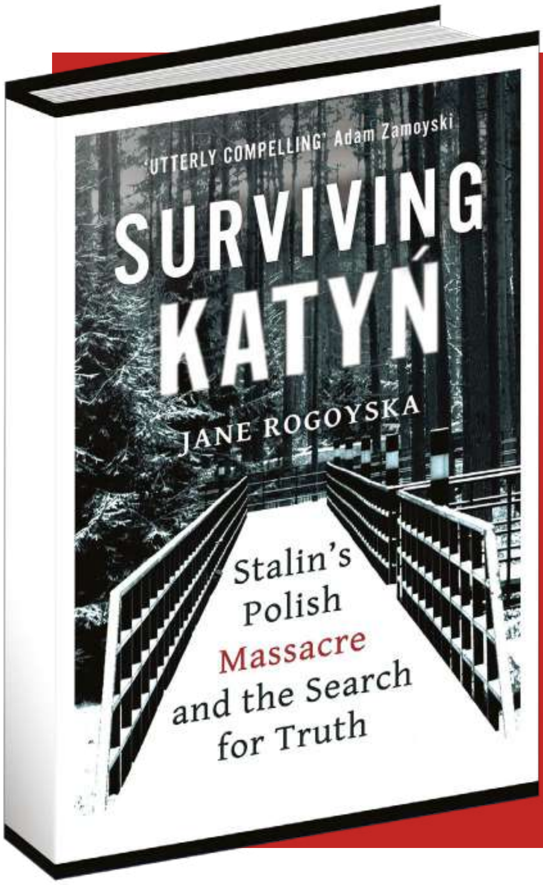


This year sees the 500th anniversary of Anne Boleyn's debut at the court of Henry VIII. Perhaps the most well-known of Henry's six wives, she nonetheless remains something of an enigma. In this tie-in book to Hever Castle's *Becoming Anne: Connections, Culture, Court* exhibition (4 March – 9 November), Dr Owen Emmerson and Kate McCaffrey examine Boyeln's upbringing, family and surroundings to explore the life of the Tudor queen.

Becoming Anne, as the title suggests, focuses on Boleyn's life up to, and concludes with, her debut at the English court. Earlier chapters explore the history of the Boleyns themselves as well as Anne's father, Thomas Boleyn, and the Boleyn women. This helps create a greater sense of Anne's origins and upbringing, where she's from and who her family were. For what is a relatively short work (a mere 96 pages), Emmerson and McCaffrey manage to pack in a wealth of facts and sources while still making sure the book is accessible to someone not well-versed in Tudor history.

Given this is an exhibition book, it's produced in the standard 'coffee table' format. As such, as well as facts, *Becoming Anne* is full of beautiful photographs and a wealth of portraits and paintings. The result is that while being a fascinating read, it's also a gorgeous book that's sure to catch the eye of the eager Tudor fanatic. A brief but fascinating book, it is very likely to entice its readers to visit Hever Castle's accompanying exhibition. ***CM***

★★★★☆


'UTTERLY COMPELLING' Adam Zamoyski
SURVIVING KATYŃ
JANE ROGOYSKA
Stalin's Polish Massacre and the Search for Truth

SURVIVING KATYŃ

A reconstruction of the massacre and its cover-up

Author: Jane Rogoyska **Publisher:** Oneworld Publications **Price:** £10.99

The first thing that's striking when reading Jane Rogoyska's *Surviving Katyń* is the extent of the research that has gone into writing this book. Brought to life by the small, meticulously details, this immersive account of the Polish soldiers captured by the Soviets and how they were eventually led to their deaths is harrowing. Rogoyska's own writing combines smoothly with the testimonies of those who survived the mass killings and those who helped to uncover the truth about the brutality of the Soviet NKVD secret police.

Beginning with the capture of thousands Polish soldiers at the start of WWII, *Surviving Katyń* follows their stories from the camps they were held prisoner in from 1939 to the present day. The decision to massacre 22,000 POWs is laid bare by Rogoyska, who questions why Stalin and the NKVD took such a barbaric course of action.

What is most shocking about this book, though, is the extent to which the Soviet Union attempted to cover up the killings which have become known as the Katyń Massacre. Rogoyska traces decades of lies to untangle the reality from the false narratives created by the Soviets, evidencing the truth with the experiences of those who were there as witnesses, victims and perpetrators. Rogoyska's empathy for the Poles who suffered at the hands of Stalin's NKVD, and their families, permeates her book, ensuring that once read this story will not be easily forgotten. ***ES***

★★★★★

Out now!

Book of Greek Mythology

The Book of Greek Mythology explores the origins of mythology in Ancient Greece and how the belief systems in Greece shaped their society into one of the greatest empires in history. It also looks at the influence and impact of the great legends on both the Greek people and the many minds that have drawn inspiration from them in the years since. Finally, we find out how the tales have fared over time.

Buy *Book of Greek Mythology* in shops or online at **magazinesdirect.com Price:** £12.99

HISTORY OF WAR RECOMMENDS...

Out now!

1945: Victory In The West

Author Peter Caddick-Adams **Price** £30 **Publisher** PRH

Military historian Peter Caddick-Adams, in his sweeping and thoroughly documented narrative of the last offensive of the Allies, offers an in-depth account of the last 100 days of the Second World War. It is a tale rarely revealed in histories of the war's final weeks which, as the author points out, tend to dwell on the 1944 D-Day landings, the summer battles in Normandy, the autumn stalemate of Operation Market Garden in Holland and the winter campaign in the Ardennes forests.

THE TUDOR AGE

How the much-discussed dynasty helped to reshape England

Author: Susan Brigden **Publisher:** The Folio Society **Price:** £85 **Released:** Out now

With few topics in history being as well-covered as the Tudors, offering insight and analysis that's truly original is a real challenge. That Susan Brigden's work, originally published in 2000, continues to feel fresh and groundbreaking in its approach is in itself an achievement. This new Folio edition brings it to life in a new way, giving it the premium treatment it rightly deserves.

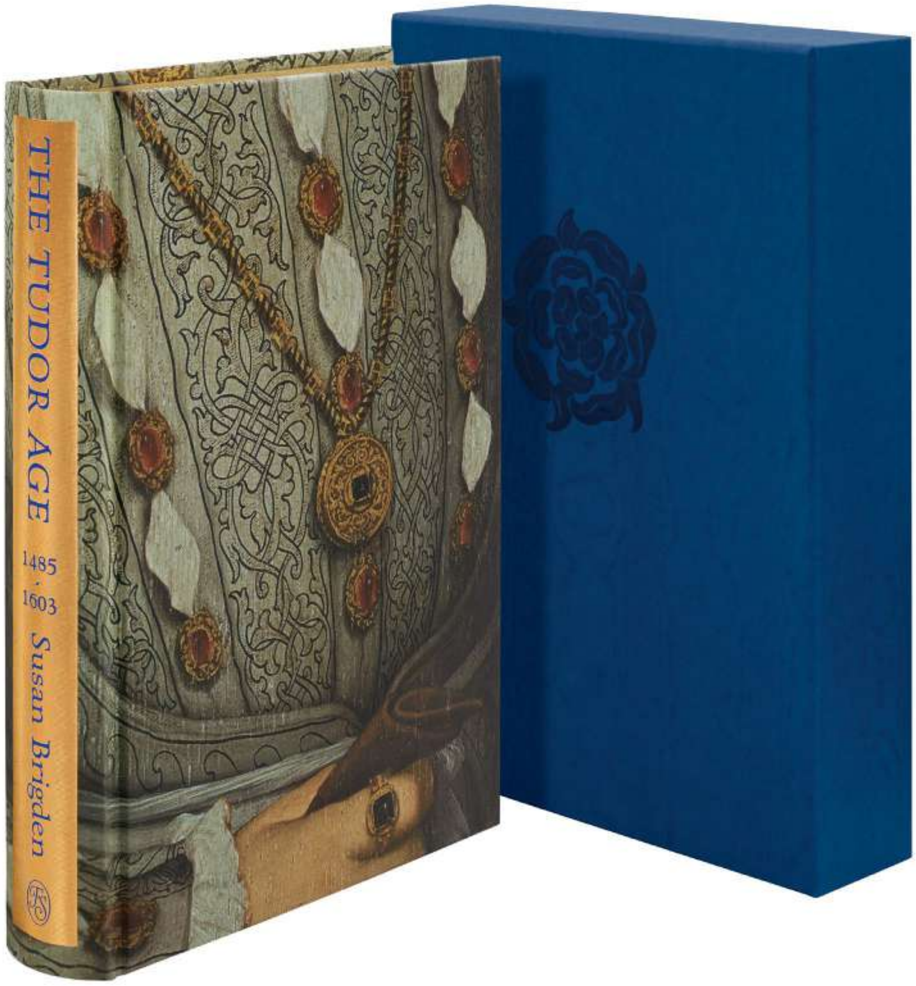
Originally titled *New Worlds, Lost Words* when it was first released, *The Tudor Age* looks to tell the story of the 118-year rule of the Tudor dynasty. Whereas books that focus on the singular rule of Henry VIII or Mary I might give us great individual depth, Brigden's approach allows for threads to be woven over generations, picked up and examined by new courts and new monarchs. With this wider lens we get to see how the Reformation and Renaissance, already well under way on mainland Europe, were at the heart of Tudor concerns.

And for the most part, as Brigden explains, the Tudor monarchs rode the wave of these movements very well by placing themselves at their vanguard. Save for Mary I, who looked to overturn the religious reforms of her father, the Tudor Age appears one of continued growth, change and enlightenment by comparison to earlier times. In religion, art, entertainment and politics, the Tudors were pushing at new boundaries into figurative new worlds, not always successfully or peacefully, but ever moving forward. Ultimately, the Elizabethan age would also fully embrace the New World in a literal sense through the exploration of the Americas.

But there were also the lost worlds of Brigden's original title, which in this case refers to the lost traditions and beliefs of medieval England that most of the population would have felt connected to. While much of the book is focused on the higher echelons of society, no small amount of space is devoted to the lives of common English, Irish and Welsh subjects of the crown and their experiences. The tumult of the back and forth between Mary I rejecting the Reformation and Elizabeth I re-embracing it is particularly important here. But we are also reminded of the economic challenges, of famine and plague, and of the (perhaps connected) superstitious terrors such as the fear of witches that would sweep through the countryside.

While Brigden's prose can be a little dense and academic at times, there is such a wealth of information here that it remains an excellent text for those looking to get a solid grasp of the importance of the Tudor dynasty to English history. Historians might often remark that it is an over-discussed period in some sense, but this kind of examination helps to remind us just why that has been the case, not just for its scandal and turmoil but for the changes that it brought that resonated through the centuries that followed. ***JG***

★★★★☆



HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

BATTLE OF THE RIVER PLATE

Director: Michael Powell **Starring:** John Gregson, Anthony Quayle, Peter Finch **Country:** UK **Released:** 1956

Legendary filmmakers Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger turn their talents to adapting one of WWII's earliest naval battles, but is accuracy sacrificed for art?

A

VERDICT: A mostly accurate movie which (unlike most war films of the era) portrays a competent German commander

01 The film is a fictionalised account of the Battle of the River Plate, during which three Allied cruisers faced off against the German battleship Admiral Graf Spee. The film's opening shows the fair treatment of Allied prisoners, something which was noted.

02 When Captain Dove is taken prisoner, the crew of the Graf Spee are seen wearing US helmets instead of the German ones of the time. This is because the Graf Spee was portrayed by the USS Salem and the US Navy would not allow Nazi insignia to be used.

03 During the battle sequences, a great deal of time is spent showing the Graf Spee focussing its attacks on HMS Exeter, which is forced to flee to the Falklands. This is accurate, as the other two ships were smaller and Exeter received the brunt of the Graf Spee's attacks.

04 British ambassador Millington Drake tries to delay the Graf Spee sailing from Montevideo. He achieves this in a manner that reflects the reality, by relaying false information over a phone line that was known to be tapped by the Germans.

05 Peter Finch plays Captain Langsdorff of the Graf Spee, who at the end of the film scuttles his ship and escapes with his men. This event really occurred but the film omits Langsdorff's suicide a few days later, having reportedly desired to go down with his ship.

Main image: © Getty Images
5x inset image source: Rank Film Distributors/ ITV Studios Home Entertainment

Main image: © Getty Images
Inset image: © Getty Images

Did you know?

The poet Callimachus recorded that loukoumades were served at the Olympic games in Ancient Greece as a prize for the successful athletes. He referred to them as "honey tokens".

Ingredients

- 200g plain flour
- 7g fast-action yeast
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 240ml warm water
- 1 litre olive/vegetable oil
- 4 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp chopped walnuts
- 1 tsp cinnamon

LOUKOUMADES

DEEP-FRIED GOLDEN DOUGH BALLS, GREECE, c.776 BCE – PRESENT

Ancient Greece is credited with being the cornerstone of Western civilisation. From cartography and marathons to theatre and the Olympics, the inventions of the Ancient Greeks have stood the test of time. But it is a sweeter invention that we are interested in for our recipe this issue.

Loukoumades are said to be the oldest known dessert in the world. Eaten as early as 776 BCE, according to some sources, these deep-fried balls of dough are still served in Greece today. There are different variations of the dessert in countries with similarly ancient civilisations such as Turkey and Egypt, and each has its own twist on the original Greek recipe. In Greece, the dough balls are typically served with honey, walnuts and sometimes cinnamon, but they can be served with any toppings you like.

METHOD

01 Mix together the yeast, caster sugar and warm water in a bowl.

02 Slowly add the flour, a little bit at a time, and mix with your hands until a runny batter forms.

03 Cover the bowl with a tea towel and leave to rest at room temperature until the batter has doubled in size. This should take approximately one hour.

04 Pour the oil into a large pan and heat until the oil bubbles. To test if the oil is ready, drop a small amount of batter into the pan. If it sizzles immediately, the oil is ready.

05 Wet a teaspoon and use it to scoop out the batter and form it into a small ball.

06 Gently drop the ball into the oil to deep-fry, and repeat until all the batter has been used.

07 Turn over the frying balls in the oil until they are golden brown all over.

08 Once golden brown, carefully remove the balls from the pan using a slotted spoon and place on dry kitchen paper to soak up the excess oil.

09 Place the balls in a shallow dish and cover them with the honey, walnuts and cinnamon.

10 Roll the balls around until they are completely covered in the honey coating, then serve.

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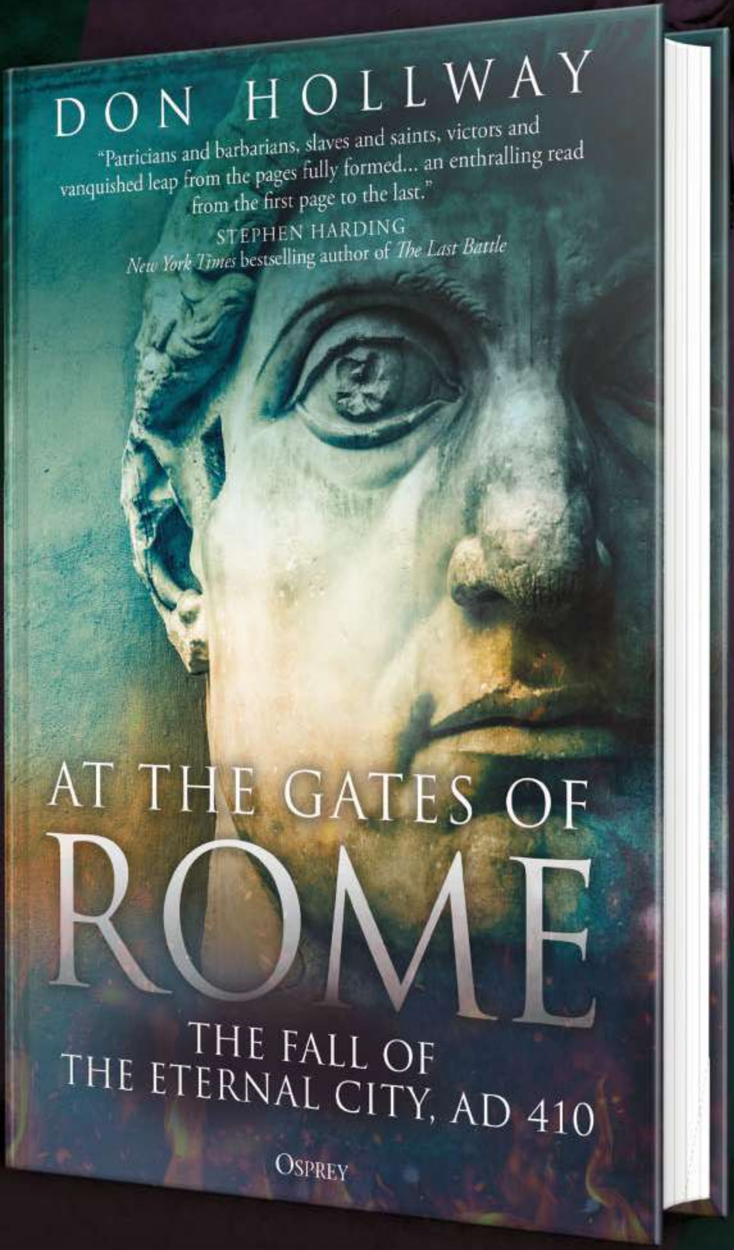
STEPHEN HARDING
New York Times bestselling author of *The Last Battle*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AT THE GATES OF
ROME
THE FALL OF
THE ETERNAL CITY, AD 410
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